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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

BY FILSON YOUNG

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THE COMPLETE MOTORIST
THE HAPPY MOTORIST

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND THE NEW WORLD OF HIS DISCOVERY

A NARRATIVE BY

FILSON YOUNG

WITH A NOTE ON THE NAVIGATION OF COLUMBUS'S FIRST VOYAGE BY THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P.

25620

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INTRODUCTION

BEING A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR

BY

HENRY VIGNAUD

Author of Histoire Critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb, *etc., etc.*[1]

Former Secretary to the American Embassy in Paris; Honorary Councillor to the American Embassy; Président de la Société des Américainistes de Paris.

DEAR MR FILSON YOUNG,

I have received the proofs of the new and revised edition of your "Columbus," and I have noted the passages which have been materially altered from the original edition.

This book marks an epoch in Columbian literature; for in it the hero who discovered the New World is shown for the first time as a living man. You have raised him from the dust of documents and shown him as a human being, a creature of flesh and blood who acts, thinks, loves and fights like ourselves, and who is subject, as all real men must be, to passions, mistakes and illusions. You have had the courage to cut loose from the traditional line followed by all the modern biographers of Columbus; and although I differ from you in certain details, I look upon your book as giving a more true and lively picture of the great discoverer than is contained in any other work written on the subject.

Your "Columbus" explains the Columbus of the archives; and it is explanations of this kind which constitute the great charm of history, and which furnish also all the profit that we can derive from it. It is not, in short, the actions of men which interest us the most; it is the motives that incite them

[1] See list of authorities at the end of the book.

to action and the inner forces that animate them, of which we find the counterparts in ourselves.

It is only in these latter days that such a book could have been written at all, for it is only since the fourth centenary of the discovery of America that we have been able to rescue from the oblivion of public and private archives, where they lay buried, documents throwing such light on Columbus that we are able at last really to know the great Genoese. Your book, which is addressed to a large public and to those who are interested in the broad outlines of the figures presented to them and in the results of their actions, does not enter into minute details nor furnish proofs of every fact that is stated; that was not necessary to your purpose, and would have changed the character of your work. It was enough for your purpose that in everything of general interest and necessary to the understanding of the facts there should be a foundation for all your assertions; and this rule you have carefully observed.

You have not fallen into the error, which so many others have not been able to avoid, of ignoring the true date of Columbus's birth—a date which was sufficiently known from the old documents, and which a new document, cited by you in your appendix, has confirmed. You have not made Columbus a student at the University of Pavia, wherein he never set foot; you have not represented this almost illiterate wool-weaver, who taught himself the little that he ever knew, in the ridiculous position of a doctor discussing point by point high questions of theology and cosmography with the professors of the University of Salamanca, then one of the most celebrated in Europe. And there are many other particulars which you have touched with discretion, and without disregarding the results of the latest critical inquiries.

Although you have not even yet credited Martin Alonso Pinzon with as large a part in the discovery of America as really belonged to him, you have had the courage to modify your original opinion in the light of fuller knowledge, and you have not repeated the absurd accusations so often brought against him—accusations the source of which was Columbus himself,

who always spoke of the man to whom he owed so much with the rankest ingratitude. Pinzon—when once he threw himself into it—was not only the spirit of the expedition of 1492, but without him it could never either have been organised or carried to a finish ; and it was his prompt action and that of his brothers which stifled the mutiny that broke out on Columbus's ship and even placed the Admiral's life in jeopardy.

Thanks to a tenacity which nothing could loosen, to a resolute confidence in the accuracy of his information and the soundness of his deductions, and, above all, to an inflexible will and undaunted energy, Columbus found the lands which he was looking for. But here crops up one of the most singular facts of his career. Having set out without any other idea except that of discovering the lands whose existence had been demonstrated to him, and the situation of which be believed he knew, he returned with the conviction that he had extended his navigation as far as the Indies—of which there had been no question at all when he set out.

The various particulars given in the nautical Journal of the great Genoese furnish the explanation of this change. Columbus had calculated that he would find the lands for the discovery of which his expedition was organised at about seven hundred leagues from the Canaries, and he had formally announced to his crews that they need not count on a longer voyage. But the events deceived his expectation; and it was only after having covered a distance considerably greater than that which he had himself fixed that he attained his end, and then only at the cost of dangerous and incessant warfare with his crew, who were unwilling to pass the limit that had been set for them on their departure.

It is clear that in these conditions Columbus, the imaginative side of whose nature was the strongest, persuaded himself that he had crossed to the extreme verge of the great Western Ocean, and reached the neighbourhood of the East Indies near to the famous Cathay, the Asiatic capital of the Great Khan, whose name appears to have had a seductive fascination for him. These delusions of a large-hearted man whose faculties were not always

well-balanced took with advancing years a more alarming character, and clouded a judgment ordinarily sound enough. After having imagined that he had come back from the Indies, he finished by saying, and perhaps by believing in all good faith, that he had always intended to go there.

The legend of the search for the East by the road to the West dates from that moment, and—what will astonish those who are not familiar with the documents of the time—this curious legend, destined to be so widely accepted, was a long time in getting itself believed. Even in the lifetime of Columbus himself no one, not even the Catholic sovereigns (except perhaps at the very first moment), believed that he had reached the borders of Asia, and everybody except himself realised that it was a new world that he had discovered. Enveloped in the clouds of this error, the poor hero, who believed himself misunderstood, spent the last years of his life in fruitless efforts to demonstrate that Asia began where he had found the Antilles. His second, third and fourth voyages were undertaken with no object other than this; and he died joyfully cherishing his error, and quite ignorant of the great thing which he had done.

It was not until more than half-a-century after his death, when his son and Las Casas had produced the letters attributed to Toscanelli which seemed to confirm Columbus's assertions as to the identity of Asia with the object which he had set himself to reach, that the legend of the search for a road to the Indies by the West obtained some credence. The Spaniards of the time knew nothing of it. Nevertheless it continued to live; there are modern authors who still believe it; it is so extraordinary, so romantic, and it has been accepted for such a long time that perhaps it will never disappear from the book of history. And how many other legends, as ill-founded as this, still find a place in its pages!

But truth is always a finer thing than fiction; and though the truth may still be misunderstood and misinterpreted, one cannot say too clearly that it was more glorious for Columbus to have found America because he looked for it, than to have discovered it by chance in the course of an absurd enterprise,

the idea of which could only have been conceived in the mind of the most ignorant geographer.

The few minor details on which I differ from you take away nothing from my sense of the excellence of your book, which well deserves the new and popular edition on which it is entering; and I deem myself fortunate in being able to recommend it to that wide circle of English and American readers to whom in my own works I have not been able to address myself directly.

Believe me, dear Mr Filson Young,

Yours sincerely,

HENRY VIGNAUD.

BAGNEUX, SEINE,
31*st October* 1911.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

THE whole of this book has been carefully revised, and parts of it rewritten. I have taken the opportunity to correct such errors as were pointed out in the Press and by private correspondents; also to condense and abbreviate the first part of the narrative, which was necessarily speculative in character.

The writers and historians who have dealt with Columbus are so many and so distinguished that, rather than attempt to enumerate them, I prefer to say simply that I owe everything to them, that my work is to be regarded as a result or continuation of theirs, and that I am only more fortunate than they in having benefited by the great flood of light that has been thrown on the subject during the last fifteen years, and that has in many respects revolutionised our conception of Columbus and his great enterprise.

F. Y.

October 1911.

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PRELUDE

THE STREAM OF THE WORLD

A MAN standing on the seashore is perhaps as ancient and as primitive a symbol of wonder as the mind can conceive. Beneath his feet are the stones and grasses of an element that is his own, natural to him, in some degree belonging to him, at any rate accepted by him. He has place and condition there. Above him arches a world of immense void, fleecy, sailing clouds, infinite clear blueness, shapes that change and dissolve; his day comes out of it, his source of light and warmth marches across it, night falls from it, showers and dews also, and the quiet influence of stars. Strange that impalpable element must be, and for ever unattainable by him; yet with its gifts of sun and shower, its furniture of winged life that inhabits also on the friendly soil, it has links and partnerships with life as he knows it and is a complement of earthly conditions. But at his feet there lies the fringe of another element, another condition, of a vaster and more simple unity than earth or air, which the primitive man of our picture knows to be not his at all. It is fluent and unstable, yet to be touched and felt; it rises and falls, moves and frets about his very feet, as though it had a life and entity of its own, and was engaged upon some mysterious business. Unlike the silent earth and the dreaming clouds, it has a voice that fills his world and, now low, now loud, echoes throughout his waking and sleeping life. Earth with her sprouting fruits behind and beneath him; sky, and larks singing, above him; before him, an eternal alien, the sea: he stands there upon the shore, arrested, wondering.

He lives, this man of our figure; he proceeds, as all must proceed, with the task and burden of life. One by one its miracles are unfolded to him; miracles of fire and cold, and pain and pleasure; the seizure of love, the terrible magic of reproduction, the sad miracle of death. He fights and lusts and endures; and,

no more troubled by any wonder, sleeps at last. But throughout the days of his life, in the very act of his rude existence, this great tumultuous presence of the sea troubles and overbears him. Sometimes in its bellowing rage it terrifies him, sometimes in its tranquillity it allures him; but whatever he is doing, grubbing for roots, chipping experimentally with bones and stones, he has an eye upon it; and in his passage by the shore he pauses, looks, and wonders. His eye is led from the crumbling snow at his feet, past the clear green of the shallows, beyond the furrows of the nearer waves, to the calm blue of the distance; and in his glance there shines again that wonder, as in his breast stirs the vague longing and unrest that is the life-force of the world.

What is there beyond? It is the eternal question asked by the finite of the infinite, by the mortal of the immortal; answer to it there is none save in the unending preoccupation of life and labour. And if this old question was in truth first asked upon the seashore, it was asked most often and with the most painful wonder upon western shores, whence the journeying sun was seen to go down and quench himself in the sea. The generations that followed our primitive man grew fast in knowledge, and perhaps for a time wondered the less as they knew the more; but we may be sure they never ceased to wonder at what might lie beyond the sea. How much more must they have wondered if they looked west upon the waters, and saw the sun of each succeeding day sink upon a couch of glory where they could not follow! All pain aspires to oblivion, all toil to rest, all troubled discontent with what is present to what is unfamiliar and far away; and no power of knowledge and scientific fact will ever prevent human unhappiness from reaching out towards some land of dreams of which the burning brightness of a sea sunset is an image. Is it very hard to believe, then, that in that yearning towards the miracle of a sun quenched in sea distance, felt and felt again in human hearts through countless generations, the westward stream of human activity on this planet had its rise? Is it unreasonable to picture, on an earth spinning eastward, a treadmill rush of feet to follow the sinking light? The history of man's life in this world does not, at any rate, contradict us. Wisdom, discovery, art, commerce, science, civilisation have all moved west across our world; have all in their cycles followed the sun; have all, in their day of power, risen in the East and set in the West.

This stream of life has grown in force and volume with the passage of ages. It has always set from shore to sea in countless currents of adventure and speculation; but it has set most strongly from East to West. On its broad bosom the seeds of life and knowledge have been carried throughout the world. It brought the people of Tyre and Carthage to the coasts and oceans of distant worlds; it carried the English from Jutland across cold and stormy waters to the islands of their conquest; it carried the Romans across half the world; it bore the civilisation of the far East to new life and virgin Western soils; it carried the new West to the old East, and is in our day bringing back again the new East to the old West. Religions, arts, tradings, philosophies, vices, and laws have been borne, a strange flotsam, upon its unchanging flood. It has had its springs and neaps, its trembling high-water marks, its hour of affluence, when the world has been flooded with golden humanity; its ebb and effluence also, when it has seemed to shrink and desert the kingdoms set upon its shores. The fifteenth century in Western Europe found it at a pause in its movements: it had brought the trade and the learning of the East to the verge of the Old World, filling the harbours of the Mediterranean with ships and the monasteries of Italy and Spain with wisdom; and in the subsequent and punctual decadence that followed this flood, there gathered in the returning tide a greater energy and volume which was to carry the Old World bodily across the ocean. And yet, for all their wisdom and power, the Spanish and Portuguese were still in the attitude of our primitive man, standing on the seashore and looking out in wonder across the sea.

The flood of the life-stream began to set again, and little by little to rise and inundate Western Europe, floating off the galleys and caravels of King Alphonso of Portugal, and sending them to feel their way along the coasts of Africa; a little later drawing the mind of Prince Henry the Navigator to devote his life to the conquest and possession of the unknown. In his great castle on the promontory of Sagres, with the voice of the Atlantic thundering in his ears, and its mists and sprays bounding his vision, he felt the full force of the stream, and stretched his arms to the mysterious West. But the inner light was not yet so brightly kindled that he dared to follow his heart; his ships went south and south again, to brave on each voyage the dangers and terrors that lay along the unknown African coast, until at length his captains saw the Cape of Good Hope. South and West and East were in those days confusing terms; for it was the East that

men were thinking of when they set their faces to the setting sun, and it was a new road to the East that they sought when they felt their way southward along the edge of the world. But the rising tide of discovery was working in that moment, engaging the brains of innumerable sages, stirring the wonder of innumerable mariners; reaching also, little by little, to quarters less immediately concerned with the business of discovery. Ships carried the strange tidings of new coasts and new islands from port to port throughout the Mediterranean; Venetians on the lagoons, Ligurians on the busy trading wharves of Genoa, were discussing the great subject; and as the tide rose and spread, it floated one ship of life after another that was destined for the great business of adventure. Some it inspired to dream and speculate, and to do no more than that; many a heart also to brave efforts and determinations that were doomed to come to nothing and to end only in failure. And among others who felt the force, and was swayed and lifted by the prevailing influence, there lived, some four and a half centuries ago, a little boy playing about the wharves of Genoa, well known to his companions as Christoforo, son of Domenico the wool-weaver, who lived in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello.

BOOK I

THE INNER LIGHT

CHAPTER I

THE HOME IN GENOA

IT is often hard to know how far back we should go in the ancestry of a man whose life and character we are trying to reconstruct. The life that is in him is not his own, but is mysteriously transmitted through the life of his parents; to the common stock of his family, flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone, character of their character, he has but added his own personality. However far back we go in his ancestry, there is something of him to be traced, could we but trace it; and although it soon becomes so widely scattered that no separate fraction of it seems to be recognisable, we know that, generations back, we may come upon some sympathetic fact, some reservoir of the essence that was him, in which we can find the source of many of his actions, and the clue, perhaps, to his character.

In the case of Columbus we are spared this dilemma. The past is reticent enough about the man himself; and about his ancestors it is almost silent. We know that he had a father and grandfather, as all grandsons of Adam have had; but we can be certain of very little more than that. He came of a race of Italian yeomen inhabiting the Apennine valleys; and in the vale of Fontanabuona, that runs up into the hills behind Genoa, the two streams of family from which he sprang were united. His father from one hamlet, his mother from another; the towering hills behind, the Mediterranean shining in front; love and marriage in the valley; and a little boy to come of it whose doings were to shake the world.

His family tree begins for us with his grandfather, Giovanni Colombo, of Terra-Rossa, one of the hamlets in the valley—concerning whom many human facts may be inferred, but only three are certainly known; that he lived, begot children, and died. Lived, first at Terra-Rossa, and afterwards upon the seashore at Quinto; begot children in number three—Antonio, Battistina, and Domenico, the father of our Christopher; and died, because one of the two facts in his history is that in the

year 1444 he was not alive, being referred to in a legal document as *quondam*, or, as we should say, "the late." Of his wife, Christopher's grandmother, since she never bought or sold or witnessed anything requiring the record of legal document, history speaks no word. Giovanni alone survives the obliterating drift of generations, which the shores and brown slopes of Quinto al Mare, where he sat in the sun and looked about him, have also survived. He could have told us many things about Domenico, and his over-sanguine buyings and sellings; could perhaps have told us something about Christopher's environment, and cleared up our doubts concerning his first home; but he will tell us nothing. He will sit in the sun there at Quinto, and sip his wine, and say his Hail Marys, and watch the sails of the feluccas leaning over the blue floor of the Mediterranean as long as you please; but of information about son or family, not a word. He is content to have survived, and triumphantly twinkles his two dates at us across the night of Time. 1440, alive; 1444, not alive any longer: and so hail and farewell, Giovanni *quondam*.

Of Antonio and Battestina, the uncle and aunt of Columbus, we know next to nothing. Uncle Antonio inherited the estate of Terra-Rossa, Aunt Battestina was married in the valley; and Antonio, who also married, had sons, cousins of Columbus, who in after years, when he became famous, made themselves unpleasant, as poor relations will, by recalling themselves to his remembrance and suggesting that something might be done for them. Less of a ghost than they, though still a very shadowy and doubtful figure, is Domenico himself, Christopher's father. He at least is a man in whom we can feel a warm interest, as the one who actually begot and reared the man of our story. We shall see him later, and chiefly in difficulties; executing deeds and leases, and striking a great variety of legal attitudes, to the witnessing of which various members of his family were called in. Little enough good did they to him at the time, poor Domenico; but he was a benefactor to posterity without knowing it, and in these grave notarial documents preserved almost the only evidence that we have as to the early days of his illustrious son. A kind, sanguine man, who, if he failed to make a good deal of money in his various enterprises, at least had some enjoyment of them, as the man who buys and sells and strikes legal attitudes in every age desires and has. He was a wool-carder by trade,

but that was not enough for him; he must buy little bits of estates here and there; must even keep a tavern, where he and his wife could entertain the foreign sailors and hear the news of the world; where also, although perhaps they did not guess it, a sharp pair of ears were also listening, and a pair of round eyes gazing, and an inquisitive face set in astonishment at the strange tales that went about.

And besides the weaving of wool and pouring of wine and buying and selling of land, there were more human occupations, which Domenico was not the man to neglect. He had married, about the year 1450, one Susanna, a daughter of Giacomo of Fontana-Rossa, a silk-weaver who lived in the hamlet near to Terra-Rossa. Perhaps the young people were married at Quinto; but if so they did not live there long, moving soon into Genoa, where Domenico could more conveniently work at his trade. The wool-weavers at that time lived in a quarter outside the old city walls, between them and the outer borders of the city, which is now occupied by the park and public gardens. Here they had their dwellings and workshops, their schools and institutions, receiving every protection and encouragement from the Signoria, who recognised the importance of the wool trade and its allied industries to Genoa. Cloth-weavers, blanket-makers, silk-weavers, and velvet-makers all lived in this quarter, and held their houses under the neighbouring abbey of San Stefano. There are two houses mentioned in documents which seem to have been in the possession of Domenico at different times. One was in the suburbs outside the Olive Gate; the other was farther in, by St Andrew's Gate, and quite near to the sea. The house outside the Olive Gate has disappeared; and it was probably there that our Christopher first saw the light, and pleased Domenico's heart with his little cries and struggles. Neither the day nor the month is certainly known, but the year has now, after centuries of doubt and inaccuracy, been definitely established as 1451.[1] They must have moved soon afterwards to the house in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello, No. 37, in which most of Christopher's childhood was certainly passed. This is a house close to St Andrew's Gate, which gate still stands in a beautiful and ruinous condition.

From the new part of Genoa, and from the Via XX Settembre, you turn into the little Piazza di Ponticello just opposite the church of San Stefano. In a moment you are in old Genoa, which is to-day in appearance virtually the same as the place

[1] See Appendix A.

in which Christopher and his little brothers and sisters made the first steps of their pilgrimage through this world. If the Italian sun has been shining fiercely upon you in the great modern thoroughfare, you will turn into this quarter of narrow streets and high houses with grateful relief. The past seems to meet you there; and from the Piazza, gay with its little provision-shops and fruit-stalls, you walk up the slope of the Vico Dritto di Ponticello, leaving the sunlight behind you, and entering the narrow street like a traveller entering a mountain gorge.

It is a very curious street this; I suppose there is no street in the world that has more character. Genoa invented sky-scrapers long before Columbus had discovered America, or America had invented steel frames for high building; but although many of the houses in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello are seven and eight storeys high, the width of the street from house-wall to house-wall does not average more than nine feet. The street is not straight, moreover; it winds a little in its ascent to the old city wall and St Andrew's Gate, so that you do not even see the sky much as you look forward and upwards. The jutting cornices of the roofs, often beautifully decorated, come together in a medley of angles and corners that practically roof the street over; and only here and there do you see a triangle or a parallelogram of the vivid brilliant blue that is the sky. Besides being seven or eight storeys high, the houses are the narrowest in the world; I should think that their average width on the street-front is ten feet. So as you walk up this street where young Christopher lived you must think of it in these three dimensions: towering slices of houses, ten or twelve feet in width; a street often not more than eight and seldom more than fifteen feet in width; and the walls of the houses themselves, painted in every colour, green and pink and grey and white, trellised with the inevitable green window-shutters of the South, and standing like cliffs on each side of you seven or eight rooms high. There being so little horizontal space for the people to live there, what little there is is most economically used; and all across the tops of the houses, high above your head, the cliffs are joined by wires and clothes-lines from which thousands of brightly-dyed garments are always hanging and fluttering; higher still, where the top storeys of the houses become merged in roof, there are little patches of garden and greenery, where geraniums and delicious tangling creepers uphold thus high above the ground the fertile tradition of earth.

ST. ANDREW'S GATE AND THE VICO DRITTO DI PONTECELLO, GENOA

Showing Columbus's House

You walk slowly up the paved street. One of its characteristics, which it shares with the old streets of most Italian towns, is that it is only used by foot-passengers, being, of course, too narrow for wheels; and it is paved across with flagstones from door to door, so that the feet and the voices echo pleasantly in it, and make a music of their own. Without exception the ground floor of every house is a shop—the gayest, busiest, most industrious little shops in the world. There are shops for provisions, where the delightful macaroni lies in its various bins, and all kinds of frugal and nourishing foods are offered for sale. There are shops for clothes and dyed finery; there are shops for boots, where boots hang in festoons like onions outside the window—I have never seen so many boot-shops at once in my life as I saw in the streets surrounding the house of Columbus. And every shop that is not a provision-shop or a clothes-shop or a boot-shop is a wine-shop—or at least you would think so, until you remember, after you have walked through the street, what a lot of other kinds of shops you have seen on your way. There are shops for newspapers and tobacco, for cheap jewellery, for brushes, for chairs and tables and articles of wood; there are shops with great stacks and piles of crockery; there are shops for cheese and butter and milk—indeed from this one little street in Genoa you could supply every necessary and every luxury of a humble life.

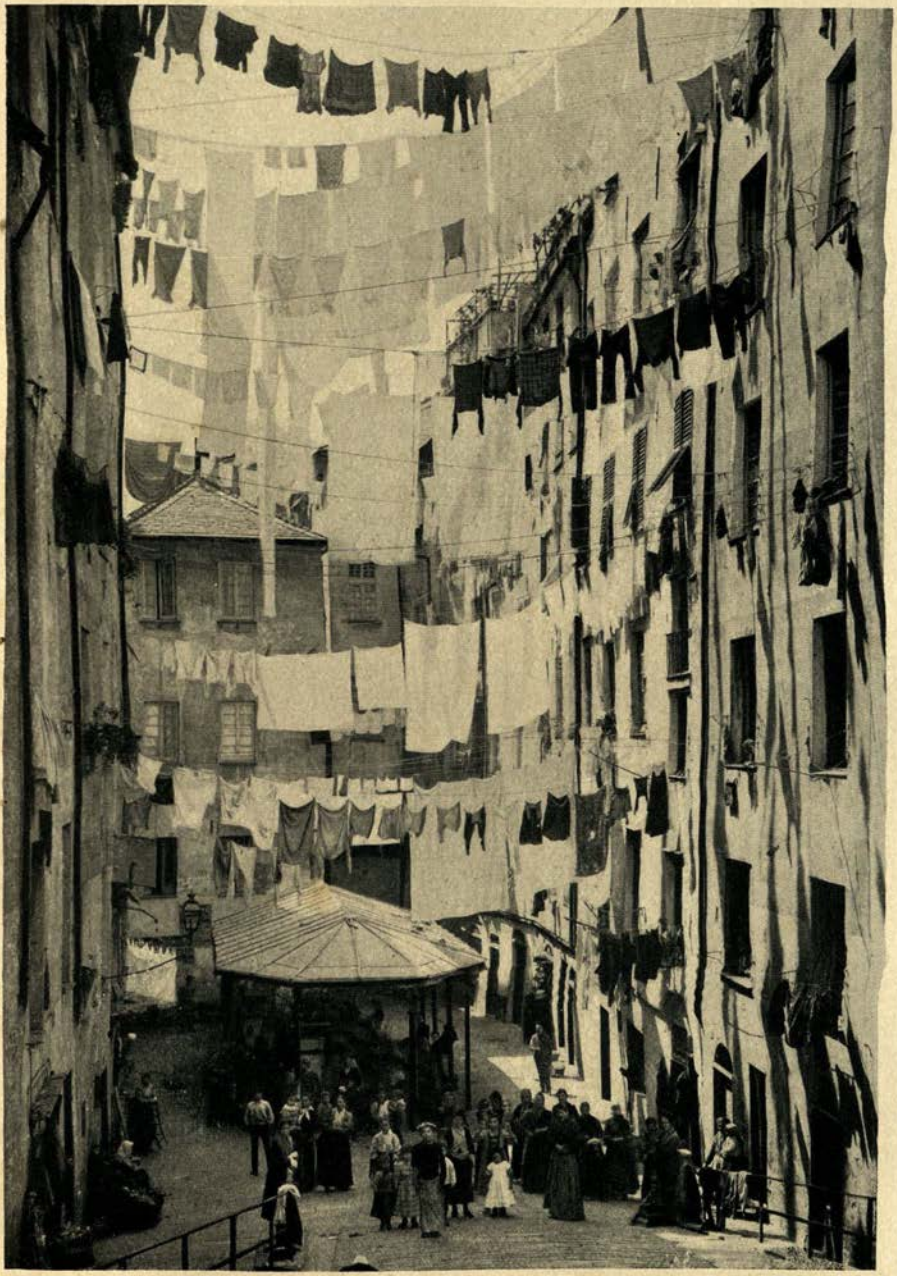
As you still go up, the street takes a slight bend; and immediately before you, you see it spanned by the lofty crumbled arch of St Andrew's Gate, with its two mighty towers one on each side. Just as you see it you are at Columbus's house. The number is thirty-seven; it is like any of the other houses, tall and narrow; and there is a slab built into the wall above the first storey, on which is written this inscription:—

NVLLA DOMVS TITVLO DIGNIOR
HEIC
PATERNIS IN AEDIBV
CHRISTOPHORVS COLVMBVS
PVERITIAM
PRIMAMQVE IVVENTAM TRANSEGIT

You stop and look at it; and presently you become conscious of a difference between it and all the other houses. They are all alert, busy, noisy, crowded with life in every storey, oozing vitality from every window; but of all the narrow vertical

strips that make up the houses of the street, this strip numbered thirty-seven is empty, silent, and dead. The shutters veil its windows; within it is dark, empty of furniture, and inhabited only by a memory and a spirit. It is a strange place in which to stand and to think of all that has happened since the man of our thoughts looked forth from these windows, a common little boy. The world is very much alive in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello; the little freshet of life that flows there flows loud and incessant; and yet into what oceans of death and silence has it not poured since it carried forth Christopher on its stream! One thinks of the continent of that New World that he discovered, and all the teeming millions of human lives that have sprung up and died down, and sprung up again, and spread and increased there; all the ploughs that have driven into its soil, the harvests that have ripened, the waving acres and miles of grain that have answered the call of spring and autumn, since first the bow of his boat grated on the shore of Guanahani. And yet of the two scenes this narrow shuttered house in a bye-street of Genoa is at once the more wonderful and more credible; for it contains the elements of the other. Walls and floors and a roof, a place to eat and sleep in, a place to work and found a family, and give tangible environment to a human soul—there is all human enterprise and discovery, effort, adventure, and life in that.

If Christopher wanted to go down to the sea he would have to pass under the Gate of St Andrew, with the old prison, now pulled down to make room for the modern buildings, on his right, and go down the Salita del Prione, which is a continuation of the Vico Dritto di Ponticello. It slopes downwards from the Gate as the first street sloped upwards to it; and it contains the same assortment of shops and of houses, the same mixture of handicrafts and industries, as were seen in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello. Presently he would come to the Piazza dell' Erbe, where there is no grass, but only a pleasant circle of little houses and shops, with already a smack of the sea in them, chiefly suggested by the shops of instrument-makers, where to-day there are compasses and sextants and chronometers. Out of the Piazza you come down the Via di San Donato and into the Piazza of that name, where for over nine centuries the church of San Donato has faced the sun and the weather. From there Christopher's young feet would follow the winding Via di San



STREET IN GENOA

Bernato, a street also inhabited by craftsmen and workers in wood and metal; and at the last turn of it, a gash of blue between the two cliff-walls of houses, you see the Mediterranean.

Here, then, between the narrow little house by the Gate and the clamour and business of the sea-front, our Christopher's feet carried him daily during some part of his childish life. What else he did, what he thought and felt, what little reflections he had, are but matters of conjecture. Genoa will tell you nothing more. You may walk over the very spot where he was born; you may unconsciously tread in the track of his vanished feet; you may wander about the wharves of the city, and see the ships loading and unloading—different ships, but still trafficking in commodities not greatly different from those of his day; you may climb the heights behind Genoa, and look out upon the great curving Gulf from Porto Fino to where the Cape of the Western Riviera dips into the sea; you may walk along the coast to Savona, where Domenico had one of his many habitations, where he kept the tavern, and whither Christopher's young feet must also have walked; and you may come back and search again in the harbour, from the old Mole and the Bank of St George to where the port and quays stretch away to the medley of sailing-ships and steamers; but you will not find any sign or trace of Christopher. No echo of the little voice that shrilled in the narrow street sounds in the Vico Dritto; the houses stand gaunt and straight, with a brilliant strip of blue sky between their roofs and the cool street beneath; but they give you nothing of what you seek. If you see a little figure running towards you in a blue smock, the head fair-haired, the face blue-eyed and a little freckled with the strong sunshine, it is not a real figure; it is an image of fantasy and a ghost of the past. For he belongs not to you or me, this child; he is not yet enslaved to the great purpose, not yet caught up into the machinery of life. His eye has not yet caught the fire of the sun setting on a western sea; he is still free and happy, and belongs only to those who love him. The little life of his first decade, unviolated by documents or history, lives happily in our dreams, as blank as sunshine.

CHAPTER II

YOUNG CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER was fourteen years old when he first went to sea, according to his own statement, but it is probable that it refers only to some coasting trip in a felucca. His first serious voyage was to the island of Chio, in 1474. We know something, however, of his doings before he finally left Italy. Already in his young heart he was feeling the influence that was to direct and shape his destiny; already, towards his home in Genoa, long ripples from the commotion of maritime adventure in the West were beginning to spread. At the age of ten he was apprenticed to his father, who undertook, according to the indentures, to provide him with board and lodging, a blue gabardine and a pair of good shoes and various other matters in return for his service. But there is no reason to suppose that he ever occupied himself very much with wool-weaving. He had a vocation quite other than that, and if he ever did make any cloth there must have been some strange thoughts and imaginings woven into it, as he plied the shuttle. Most of his biographers, relying upon a doubtful statement in the life of him written by his son Ferdinand, would have us send him at the age of twelve to the distant University of Pavia, there, poor mite, to sit at the feet of learned professors studying Latin, mathematics, and cosmography; but fortunately it is not necessary to believe so improbable a statement. What is much more likely about his education—for education he had, although not of the superior kind with which he has been credited—is that in the blank, sunny time of his childhood he was sent to one of the excellent schools established by the weavers in their own quarter, and that there or afterwards he came under some influence, both religious and learned, which stamped him the practical visionary that he remained throughout his life. Thereafter, between his sea voyagings and expeditions about the Mediterranean coasts, he no doubt acquired knowledge in the only really practical way that it can be acquired; that is to say, he received it as and

when he needed it. What we know is that he had in later life some knowledge of the works of Aristotle, Julius Cæsar, Seneca, Pliny, and Ptolemy; of Ahmet-Ben-Kothair the Arabic astronomer, Rochid the Arabian, and the Rabbi Samuel the Jew; of Isidore the Spaniard, and Bede and Scotus the Britons; of Strabo the German, Gerson the Frenchman, and Nicolaus de Lira the Italian. These names cover a wide range, but they do not imply university education. Some of them merely suggest acquaintance with the "Imago Mundi"; others imply that selective faculty, the power of choosing what can help a man's purpose and of rejecting what is useless to it, that is one of the marks of genius, and an outward sign of the inner light.

We must think of him, then, at school in Genoa, grinding out the tasks that are the common heritage of all small boys; working a little at the weaving, interestedly enough at first, no doubt, while the importance of having a loom appealed to him, but also no doubt rapidly cooling off in his enthusiasm as the pastime became a task, and the restriction of indoor life began to be felt. For if ever there was a little boy who loved to idle about the wharves and docks, here was that little boy. It was here, while he wandered about the crowded quays and listened to the medley of talk among the foreign sailors, and looked beyond the masts of the ships into the blue distance of the sea, that the desire to wander and go abroad upon the face of the waters must first have stirred in his heart. The wharves of Genoa in those days combined in themselves all the richness of romance and adventure, buccaneering, trading, and treasure-snatching, that has ever crowded the pages of romance. There were galleys and caravels, barques and feluccas, pinnaces and caraccas. There were slaves in the galleys, and bowmen to keep the slaves in subjection. There were dark-bearded Spaniards, fair-haired Englishmen; there were Greeks, and Indians, and Portuguese. The bales of goods on the harbour-side were eloquent of distant lands, and furnished object-lessons in the only geography that young Christopher was likely to be learning. There was cotton from Egypt and tin and lead from Southampton. There were butts of Malmsey from Candia; aloes and cassia and spices from Sofala; rhubarb from Persia; silk from India; wool from Damascus, raw wool also from Calais and Norwich. No wonder if the little house in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello became too narrow for the boy; and no wonder that

sooner or later he was bound to have his way, and go to sea. One can imagine him gradually acquiring an influence over his father, Domenico, as his will grew stronger and firmer—he with one grand object in life, Domenico with none; he with a single clear purpose, and Domenico with innumerable cloudy ones. In 1472 and 1473 he was with his father at Savona, helping with the wool-weaving and tavern-keeping; possibly also there were interviews with Benincasa, who was at that time living in Genoa, and making his famous sea charts. Perhaps it was in his studio that Christopher first saw a chart, and first fell in love with the magic that can transfer the shapes of oceans and continents to a piece of paper. And so, on some day in the distant past, there were farewells in the weaver's house, and Christopher, member of the crew of some trading caravel or felucca, a diminishing object to the eyes of his friends, sailed away, and faded into the blue distance.

They had lost him, although perhaps they did not realise it; from the moment of his first voyage the sea claimed him as her own. Widening horizons, slatting of cords and sails in the wind, storms and stars and strange landfalls and long, idle calms, thunder of surges, tingle of spray, and eternal labouring and threshing and cleaving of infinite waters—these were to be his portion and true home hereafter. Attendances at Court, conferences with learned monks and bishops, sojourns on lonely islands, love under stars in the gay, sun-smitten Spanish towns, governings and parleyings in distant, undreamed-of lands—these were to be but incidents in his true life, which was to be fulfilled in the solitude of sea watches.

When he left his home on this first voyage he took with him one other thing besides the restless longing to escape beyond the line of sea and sky. Let us mark well this possession of his, for it was his companion and guiding-star throughout a long and difficult life, his chart and compass, astrolabe and anchor, in one. Religion has in our days fallen into decay among men of intellect and achievement. The world has thrown it, like a worn garment or an old skin, from off its body, the thing itself being no longer in harmony with the life of an age that struggles towards a different kind of truth. It is hard, therefore, for us to understand exactly how the religion of Columbus entered so deeply into his life and brooded so widely over his thoughts. Hardest of all is it for people whose only experience of religion is of Puritan inheritance to comprehend how, in the fifteenth century, the strong intellect was strengthened, and the stout

heart fortified, by the thought of hosts of saints and angels hovering above a man's incomings and outgoings to guide and protect him. Yet in an age that really had the gift of faith, in which religion was real and vital, and part of the business of every man's daily life; in which it stood honoured in the world, loaded with riches, crowned with learning, wielding government both temporal and spiritual, it was a very brave panoply for the soul of man. The little boy in Genoa, with the fair hair and blue eyes and grave freckled face that made him remarkable among his dark companions, had no doubt early received and accepted the vast mysteries of the Christian faith; and as that other mystery began to grow in his mind, and that idea of worlds that might lie beyond the sea-line began to take shape in his thoughts, he found in the holy wisdom of the prophets, and the inspired writings of the Fathers, a continual confirmation of his faith. The full conviction of these things belongs to a later period of his life; but, probably, during his first voyagings in the Mediterranean, there rung in his mind echoes of psalms and prophecies that had to do with things beyond the world of his vision and experience. The sun, whose going forth is to the end of heaven, his circuit back to the end of it, and from whose heat there is nothing hid; the truth, holy and prevailing, that knows no speech nor language where its voice is not heard; the great and wide sea, with its creeping things innumerable, and beasts small and great—no wonder if these things impressed him, and if gradually, as his way fell clearer before him, and the inner light began to shine more steadily, he came to believe that he had a special mission to carry the torch of the faith across the Sea of Darkness, and be himself the bearer of a truth that was to go through all the earth, and of words that were to travel to the world's end.

In this faith, then, and with this equipment, and about the year 1474,[1] Christopher Columbus began his sea travels. His voyages would be at first much along the coasts, and across to Alexandria and the Islands. There would be returnings to Genoa, and glad welcomings by the little household in the narrow street. Then he would be off again in another ship, to the Golden Horn perhaps, or the Black Sea; for the Genoese had a great Crimean trade. This is all conjecture, but very reasonable conjecture; what we know for a fact is that he saw the white gum drawn from the lentiscus shrubs in Chio at the time of their flowering; that fragrant memory is preserved long afterwards in

[1] H. Vignaud, "Études," p. 328.

his own writings, evoked by some incident in the newly-discovered islands of the West. There are vague rumours and stories of his having been engaged in various expeditions—among them one fitted out in Genoa by John of Anjou to recover the kingdom of Naples for King René of Provence; but there is no reason to believe these rumours: good reason to disbelieve them, rather.

The lives that the sea absorbs are passed in a great variety of adventure and experience, but so far as the world is concerned they are passed in a profound obscurity; and we need not wonder that of all the mariners who used those seas, and passed up and down, and held their course by the stars, and reefed their sails before the sudden squalls that came down from the mountains, and shook them out again in the calm sunshine that followed, there is no record of the one among their number who was afterwards to reef and steer and hold his course to such mighty purpose. For this period, then, we must leave him to the sea, and to the vast anonymity of sea life.

CHAPTER III

SEA THOUGHTS

THE years that Christopher Columbus spent at sea in making voyages to and from his home in Genoa, years so blank to us, but to him who lived them so full of life and active growth, were most certainly fruitful in training and equipping him for that future career of which as yet, perhaps, he did not dream. The long undulating waves of the Mediterranean, with land appearing and dissolving away in the morning and evening mists, the business of ship life, harsh and rough in detail, but not too absorbing to the mind of a common mariner to prevent any thoughts he might have finding room to grow and take shape; sea breezes, sea storms, sea calms; these were the setting of his knowledge and experience as he fared from port to port and from sea to sea. He is a very elusive figure in that environment of misty blue, very hard to hold and identify, very shy of our scrutiny, and inaccessible even to our speculation. If we would come up with him and place ourselves in some kind of sympathy with the thoughts that were forming in his brain, it is necessary that we should, for the moment, forget much of what we know of the world, and assume the imperfect knowledge of the globe that man possessed in those years when Columbus was sailing the Mediterranean.

That the earth was a round globe of land and water was a fact that, after many contradictions and uncertainties, intelligent men had by this time accepted. A conscious knowledge of the world as a whole had been a part of human thought for many hundreds of years; and the sphericity of the earth had been a theory in the sixth century before Christ. In the fourth century Aristotle had watched the stars and eclipses; in the third century Eratosthenes had measured a degree of latitude, and measured it wrong; in the second century the philosopher Crates had constructed a rude sort of globe, on which were marked the known kingdoms of the earth, and some also unknown. With the coming of the Christian era the theory of the

roundness of the earth began to be denied; and as knowledge and learning became gathered into the hands of the Church they lost something of their clarity and singleness, and began to be used arbitrarily as evidence for or against other and less material theories. St Chrysostom opposed the theory of the earth's roundness; St Isidore taught it; and so also did St Augustine, as we might expect from a man of his wisdom who lived so long in a monastery that looked out to sea from a high point, and who wrote the words *Ubi magnitudo, ibi veritas.* In the sixth century of the Christian era Bishop Cosmas gave much thought to this matter of a round world, and found a new argument which to his mind (poor Cosmas!) disposed of it very clearly; for he argued that, if the world were round, the people dwelling at the antipodes could not see Christ at His coming, and that therefore the earth was not round. But Bede, in the eighth century, established it finally as a part of human knowledge that the earth and all the heavenly bodies were spheres, and after that the fact was not again seriously disputed.

What lay beyond the frontier of the known was a speculation inseparable from the spirit of exploration. Children, and people who do not travel, are generally content, when their thoughts stray beyond the paths trodden by their feet, to believe that the greater world is but a continuation on every side of their own environment; indeed, without the help of sight or suggestion, it is almost impossible to believe anything else. If you stand on an eminence in a great plain and think of the unseen country that lies beyond the horizon, trying to visualise it and imagine that you see it, the eye of imagination can only see the continuance or projection of what is seen by the bodily sight. If you think, you can occupy the invisible space with a landscape made up from your own memory and knowledge: you may think of mountain chains and rivers, although there are none visible to your sight, or you may imagine vast seas and islands, oceans and continents. This, however, is thought, not pure imagination; and even so, with every advantage of thought and knowledge, you will not be able to imagine beyond your horizon a space of sea so wide that the farther shore is invisible, and yet imagine the farther shore also. You will see America across the Atlantic and Japan across the Pacific; but you cannot see, in one single effort of the imagination, an Atlantic of empty, blue water stretching to an empty horizon, another beyond that equally vast and empty, another beyond that, and so on until you have spanned the thousand horizons that lie between England and

America. The mind, that is to say, works in steps and spans corresponding to the spans of physical sight; it cannot clear itself enough from the body, or rise high enough beyond experience, to comprehend spaces so much vaster than anything ever seen by the eye of man. So also with the stretching of the horizon which bounded human knowledge of the earth. It moved step by step; if one of Prince Henry's captains, creeping down the west coast of Africa, discovered a cape a hundred miles south of the known world, the most he could probably do was to imagine that there might lie, still another hundred miles farther south, another cape; to sail for it in faith and hope, to find it, and to imagine another possibility yet another hundred miles away. So far as experience went back, faith could look forward. It is thus with the common run of mankind; yesterday's march is the measure of to-morrow's; as much as they have done once, they may do again; they fear it will be not much more; they hope it may be not much less.

The history of the exploration of the world up to the day when Columbus set sail from Palos is just such a history of steps. The Phœnicians coasting from harbour to harbour through the Mediterranean; the Romans marching from camp to camp, from country to country; the Jutes venturing in their frail craft into the stormy northern seas, making voyages a little longer and more daring every time, until they reached England; the captains of Prince Henry of Portugal feeling their way from voyage to voyage down the coast of Africa—there are no bold flights into the incredible here, but patient and business-like progress from one stepping-stone to another. Dangers and hardships there were, and brave followings of the faint will-o'-the-wisp of faith in what lay beyond; but there were no great launchings into space. They but followed a line that was the continuance or projection of the line they had hitherto followed; what they did was brave and glorious, but it was reasonable. What Columbus did, on the contrary, was, as we shall see later, against all reason and knowledge. It was a leap in the dark towards some star invisible to all but him; for he who sets forth across the desert sand or sea must have a brighter sun to guide him than that which sets and rises on the day of the small man.

Our familiarity with maps and atlases makes it difficult for us to think of the world in other terms than those of map and diagram; knowledge and science have focused things for us,

and our imagination has in consequence shrunk. It is almost impossible, when thinking of the earth as a whole, to think about it except as a picture drawn, or as a small globe with maps traced upon it. I am sure that our imagination has a far narrower angle—to borrow a term from the science of lenses—than the imagination of men who lived in the fifteenth century. They thought of the world in its actual terms—seas, islands, continents, gulfs, rivers, oceans. Columbus had seen maps and charts—among them the famous *portolani* of Benincasa at Genoa; but I think it unlikely that he was so familiar with them as to have adopted their terms in his thoughts about the earth. He had seen the Mediterranean and sailed upon it before he had seen a chart of it; he knew a good deal of the world itself before he had seen a map of it. He had more knowledge of the actual earth and sea than he had of pictures or drawings of them; and therefore, if we are to keep in sympathetic touch with him, we must not think too closely of maps, but of land and sea themselves.

The world that Columbus had heard about as being within the knowledge of men extended on the north to Iceland and Scandinavia, on the south to a cape one hundred miles south of the equator, and to the east as far as China and Japan. North and South were not important to the spirit of that time; it was East and West that men thought of when they thought of the expansion and the discovery of the world. And although they admitted that the earth was a sphere, I think it likely that they imagined (although the imagination was contrary to their knowledge) that the line of West and East was far longer, and full of vaster possibilities, than that of North and South. North was familiar ground to them—one voyage to England, another to Iceland, another to Scandinavia; there was nothing impossible about that. Southward was another matter; but even here there was no ambition to discover the limit of the world. An error continually made by the biographers of Columbus is the assumption that the purpose of Prince Henry's explorations down the coast of Africa was to find a road to the West by way of the East. It was nothing of the kind. There was no idea in the minds of the Portuguese of the lands which Columbus discovered, and which we now know as the West Indies. M. Vignaud contends [1] that the confusion arose from the very loose way in which the term India was applied in the Middle Ages. Several Indias were recognised. There was an India beyond the Ganges; a Middle

[1] H. Vignaud, "La Lettre et la Carte de Toscanelli," Paris, 1901.

India between the Ganges and the Indus; and a Lesser India, in which were included Arabia, Abyssinia, and the countries about the Red Sea. These divisions were, however, quite vague, and varied in different periods. In the time of Columbus the word India meant the kingdom of Prester John, that fabulous monarch who had been the subject of persistent legends since the twelfth century; and it was this India to which the Portuguese sought a sea road. They had no idea of a barrier cape far to the south, the doubling of which would open a road for them to the west; nor were they, as M. Vignaud believes, trying to open a route for the spice trade with the Orient. They had no great spice trade, and did not seek more; what they did seek was an extension of their ordinary trade with Guinea and the African coast. To the maritime world of the fifteenth century, then, the South as a geographical region and as a possible point of discovery had no attractions.

To the west stretched what was known as the Sea of Darkness, about which even the cool knowledge of the geographers and astronomers could not think steadily. Nothing was known about it, it did not lead anywhere, there were no people there, there was no trade in that direction. The tides of history and of life avoided it; only now and then some terrified mariner, blown far out of his course, came back with tales of sea monsters and enchanted, disappearing islands, and shores that receded, and coasts upon which no one could make a landfall. The farthest land known to the west was the Azores; beyond that stretched a vague and impossible ocean of terror and darkness, of which the Arabian writer Xerif al Edrisi, whose countrymen were the sea-kings of the Middle Ages, wrote as follows:—

"The ocean encircles the ultimate bounds of the inhabited earth, and all beyond it is unknown. No one has been able to verify anything concerning it, on account of its difficult and perilous navigation, its great obscurity, its profound depth, and frequent tempests; through fear of its mighty fishes and its haughty winds; yet there are many islands in it, some peopled, others uninhabited. There is no mariner who dares to enter into its deep waters; or if any have done so, they have merely kept along its coasts, fearful of departing from them. The waves of this ocean, although they roll as high as mountains, yet maintain themselves without breaking; for if they broke it would be impossible for a ship to plough them."

It is another illustration of the way in which discovery and imagination had hitherto gone by steps and not by flights, that

geographical knowledge reached the islands of the Atlantic (none of which were at a very great distance from the coast of Europe or from each other) at a comparatively early date, and stopped there until in Columbus there was found a man with faith strong enough to make the long flight beyond them to the unknown West. And yet the philosophers, and later the cartographers, true to their instinct for this pedestrian kind of imagination, put mythical lands and islands to the westward of the known islands, as though they were really trying to make a way, to sink stepping-stones into the deep sea that would lead their thoughts across the unknown space. There was the island of Antilia, which was placed in 25° 35′ W., and was said to have been discovered by Don Roderick, the last of the Gothic kings of Spain, who fled there after his defeat by the Moors. There was the island of the Seven Cities, which is sometimes identified with this Antilia, and was the object of a persistent belief or superstition on the part of the inhabitants of the Canary Islands. They saw, or thought they saw, about ninety leagues to the westward, an island with high peaks and deep valleys. The vision was intermittent; it was only seen in very clear weather, on some of those pure, serene days of the tropics when in the clear atmosphere distant objects appear to be close at hand. In cloudy, and often in clear weather also, it was not to be seen at all; but the inhabitants of the Canaries, who always saw it in the same place, were so convinced of its reality that they petitioned the King of Portugal to allow them to go and take possession of it; and several expeditions were in fact despatched, but none ever came up with that fairy land. It was called the island of the Seven Cities from a legend of seven bishops who had fled from Spain at the time of the Moorish conquest, and, landing upon this island, had founded there seven splendid cities. There was the island of St Brandan, called after the saint who set out from Ireland in the sixth century in search of an island which always receded before his ships; this island was placed several hundred miles to the west of the Canaries on maps and charts throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was the island of Brazil, to the west of Cape St Vincent; the islands of Royllo, San Giorgio, and Isola di Mam; but they were all islands of dreams, seen by the eyes of many mariners in that imaginative time, but never trodden by any foot of man. To Columbus, however, and the mariners of his day, they were all real places, which a man might reach by special good fortune or heroism, but which, all things considered, it was not quite worth the

while of any man to attempt to reach. They have all disappeared from our charts, like the Atlantis of Plato, that was once charted to the westward of the Straits of Gibraltar, and of which the Canaries were believed to be the last peaks unsubmerged.

Sea myths and legends are strange things, and do not as a rule persist in the minds of men unless they have had some ghostly foundation; so it is possible that these fabled islands of the West were lands that had actually been seen by living eyes, although their position could never be properly laid down nor their identity assured. Of all the wandering seamen who talked in the wayside taverns of Atlantic seaports, some must have had strange tales to tell; tales which sometimes may have been true, but were never believed. Vague rumours hung about those shores, like spray and mist about a headland, of lands seen and lost again in the unknown and uncharted ocean. Doubtless the lamp of faith, the inner light, burned in some of these storm-tossed men; but all they had was a glimpse here and there, seen for a moment and lost again; not the clear sight of faith by which Columbus steered his westward course.

The actual outposts of western occupation, then, were the Azores, which were discovered by the Genoese sailors in pay of Portugal early in the fourteenth century; the Canaries, which had been continuously discovered and rediscovered since the Phœnicians occupied them and Pliny chose them for his Hesperides; and Madeira, which is believed to have been discovered by an Englishman under the following very romantic and moving circumstances.

In the reign of Edward the Third a young man named Robert Machin fell in love with a beautiful girl, his superior in rank, Anne Dorset of d'Urfey by name. She loved him also, but her relations did not love him; and therefore they had Machin imprisoned upon some pretext or other, and forcibly married the young lady to a nobleman who had a castle on the shores of the Bristol Channel. The marriage being accomplished, and the girl carried away by her bridegroom to his seat in the West, it was thought safe to release Machin. Whereupon he collected several friends, and they followed the newly-married couple to Bristol and laid their plans for an abduction. One of the friends got himself engaged as a groom in the service of the unhappy bride, and found her love unchanged, and if possible in-

creased by the present misery she was in. An escape was planned; and one day, when the girl and her groom were riding in the park, they set spurs to their horses and galloped off to a place on the shores of the Bristol Channel, where young Robert had a boat on the beach and a ship in the offing. They set sail immediately, intending to make for France, where the reunited lovers hoped to live happily; but it came on to blow when they were off the Lizard, and a southerly gale, which lasted for thirteen days, drove them far out of their course. The bride, from her joy and relief, fell into a state of the gloomiest despondency, believing that the hand of God was turned against her, and that their love would never be enjoyed. The tempest fell on the fourteenth day, and at the break of morning the sea-worn company saw trees and land ahead of them. In the sunrise they landed upon an island full of noble trees, about which flights of singing birds were hovering, and in which the sweetest fruits, the most lovely flowers, and the purest and most limpid waters abounded. Machin and his bride and their friends made an encampment on a flowery meadow in a sheltered valley, where for three days they enjoyed the sweetness and rest of the shore and the companionship of all kinds of birds and beasts, which showed no signs of fear at their presence. On the third day a storm arose, and raged for a night over the island; and in the morning the adventurers found that their ship was nowhere to be seen. The despair of the little company was extreme, and was increased by the condition of poor Anne, upon whom terror and remorse again fell, and so preyed upon her mind that in three days she was dead. Her lover, who had braved so much and won her so gallantly, was turned to stone by this misfortune. Remorse and aching desolation oppressed him; from the moment of her death he scarcely ate or spoke, and in five days he also was dead, surely of a broken heart. They buried him beside his mistress under a spreading tree, and put up a wooden cross there, with a prayer that any Christians who might come to the island would build a chapel to Jesus the Saviour. The rest of the party then repaired their little boat and put to sea; were cast upon the coast of Morocco, captured by the Moors, and thrown into prison. With them in prison was a Spanish pilot named Juan de Morales, who listened attentively to all they could tell him about the situation and condition of the island, and who after his release communicated what he knew to Prince Henry of Portugal. The island of Madeira was thus rediscovered in 1418, and in 1425 was colonised by Prince Henry, who appointed as governor Bartolomeo de

Perestrello, whose daughter was afterwards to become the wife of Columbus.

So much for the outposts of the Old World. Of the New World, about the possibility of which Columbus is beginning to dream as he sails the Mediterranean, there was no knowledge and hardly any thought. Though new in the thoughts of Columbus, it was very old in itself; generations of men had lived and walked and spoken and toiled there, ever since men came upon the earth; sun and shower, the thrill of the seasons, birth and life and death, had been visiting it for centuries and centuries. And it is quite possible that, long before even the civilisation that produced Columbus was in its dawn, men from the Old World had journeyed there. There are two very old fragments of knowledge which indicate at least the possibility of a Western World of which the ancients had knowledge. There is a fragment, preserved from the fourth century before Christ, of a conversation between Silenus and Midas, King of Phrygia, in which Silenus correctly describes the Old World—Europe, Asia, and Africa—as being surrounded by the sea, but also describes, far to the west of it, a huge island, which had its own civilisation and its own laws, where the animals and the men were of twice our stature, and lived for twice our years. There is also the story told by Plato of the island of Atlantis, which was larger than Africa and Asia together, and which in an earthquake disappeared beneath the waves, producing such a slime upon the surface that no ship was able to navigate the sea in that place. This is the story which the priests of Sais told to Solon, and which was embodied in the sacred inscriptions in their temples. It is strange that any one should think of this theory of the slime who had not seen or heard of the Sargasso Sea—that great bank of floating seaweed that the ocean currents collect and retain in the middle of the basin of the North Atlantic.

The Egyptians, the Tartars, the Canaanites, the Chinese, the Arabians, the Welsh, and the Scandinavians have all been credited with the colonisation of America; but the only race from the Old World which is believed to have been there were the Scandinavians. In the year 983 the coast of Greenland was visited by Eric the Red, the son of a Norwegian noble, who was banished for the crime of murder. Some fifteen years later Eric's son Lief made an expedition with thirty-five men and a ship in the direction of the new land. They came to a coast where there were nothing but ice mountains having the appearance of slate; this country they named Helluland—that is, Land of Slate.

This country is our Newfoundland. Standing out to sea again, they reached a level wooded country with white sandy cliffs, which they called Markland, or Land of Wood, which is our Nova Scotia. Next they reached an island east of Markland, where they passed the winter; and as one of their number who had wandered some distance inland had found vines and grapes, Lief named the country Vinland or Vine Land, which is the country we call New England. The Scandinavians continued to make voyages to the West and South; and finally Thorfinn Karlsefne, an Icelander, made a great expedition in the spring of 1007 with ships and material for colonisation. He made much progress to the southwards; and the Icelandic accounts of the climate and soil and characteristics of the country leave no doubt that Greenland and Nova Scotia were discovered and colonised at this time.

It must be remembered, however, that then and in the lifetime of Columbus Greenland was supposed to be a promontory of the coast of Europe, and was not connected in men's minds with a western continent. Its early discovery has no bearing on the significance of Columbus's achievement, the greatness of which depends not on his having been the first man from the Old World to set foot upon the shores of the New, but on the fact that by pure faith and belief in his own purpose he did set out for and arrive in a world where no man of his era or civilisation had ever before set foot, or from which no wanderer who may have been blown there ever returned. It is enough to claim for him the merit of discovery in the true sense of the word. The New World was covered from the Old by a veil of distance, of time and space, of absence, invisibility, virtual non-existence; and he discovered it.

[1] It is only right to inform the reader that M. Henry Vignaud has seriously weakened, if he has not destroyed, the evidence on which these statements rest, and by which they have hitherto been believed. He says that there is no evidence that the Scandinavians ever got farther south than the Arctic regions of Labrador. His argument may be studied in "Les Expéditions des Scandinaves en Amérique devant la Critique, etc.," par Henry Vignaud, Paris. Société des Américainistes de Paris, 1911.

CHAPTER IV

IN PORTUGAL

THERE is no reason to believe that before his twenty-fifth year Columbus was anything more than a merchant or mariner, sailing before the mast, and joining one ship after another as opportunities for good voyages offered themselves. A change took place later, probably after his marriage, when he began to adapt himself rapidly to a new set of surroundings, and to show his intrinsic qualities; but all the attempts that have been made to glorify him socially—attempts, it must be remembered, in which he himself and his sons were in after years the leaders—are entirely mistaken. That strange instinct for consistency which makes people desire to see the outward man correspond, in terms of momentary and arbitrary credit, with the inner and hidden man of the heart, has in truth led to more biographical injustice than is fully realised. If Columbus had been the man some of his biographers would like to make him out—the nephew or descendant of a famous French Admiral, educated at the University of Pavia, belonging to a family of noble birth and high social esteem in Genoa, chosen by King René to be the commander of naval expeditions, learned in scientific lore, in the classics, in astronomy, and in cosmography, the friend and correspondent of Toscanelli and other learned scientists—we should find it hard indeed to forgive him the shifts and deceits that he practised. It is far more interesting to think of him as a common craftsman, of a lowly condition and poor circumstances, who had to earn his living during the formative period of his life by the simplest and hardest labour of the hand. The qualities that made him what he was were of a very simple kind, and his character owed its strength, not to any complexity or subtlety of training and education, but rather to that very bareness and simplicity of circumstance that made him a man of simple rather than manifold ideas. He was not capable of seeing both sides of a question; he saw only one side. But he came of a great race; and it was the qualities of his race, combined with this simplicity and even perhaps vacancy of mind,

that gave to his idea, when once the seed of it had lodged in his mind, so much vigour in growth and room for expansion. Think of him, then, at the age of twenty-five as a typical plebeian Genoese, bearing all the characteristic traits of his century and people—the spirit of adventure, the love of gold and of power, a spirit of mysticism, and more than a touch of crafty and elaborate dissimulation, when that should be necessary.

He had been at sea for two or three years, making voyages to and from Genoa, with an occasional spell ashore and plunge into the paternal affairs, when in the year 1476 he found himself on board a Genoese vessel which formed one of a convoy going to Lisbon. This convoy was attacked off Cape St Vincent by Colombo, or Colomb, the famous French corsair, of whom Christopher himself has quite falsely been called a relative. Only two of the Genoese vessels escaped, and one of these two was the ship which carried Columbus. It arrived at Lisbon, where Columbus went ashore and took up his abode.

This, so far as can be ascertained, is the truth about the arrival of Columbus in Portugal. The early years of an obscure man who leaps into fame late in life are nearly always difficult to gather knowledge about, because of that instinct, to which I have already referred, to make out that the circumstances of a man who late in life becomes great and remarkable were always, at every point in his career, remarkable also. We love to trace the hand of destiny guiding her chosen people, protecting them from dangers, and preserving them for their great moment. It is a pleasant study, and one to which the facts often lend themselves; but it leads to a vicious method of biography which obscures the truth with legends and pretences that have afterwards laboriously to be cleared away. It was so in the case of Columbus. Before his departure on his first voyage of discovery there is absolutely no contemporary record of him except a few dates in notarial registers. The circumstances of his life and his previous condition were supplied afterwards by himself and his contemporaries; and both he and they saw the past in the light of the present, and did their best to make it fit a present so wonderful and miraculous. The whole trend of recent research on the subject of Columbus has been, unfortunately, in the direction of proving the complete insincerity of his own speech and writings about his early life, and the inaccuracy of Las Casas, his contemporary biographer, and the first historian of

the West Indies. Those of my readers, then, who are inclined to be impatient with the meagreness of the facts with which I am presenting them, and the disproportionate amount of theory to fact with regard to those early years of Columbus, must remember three things—first, that the only record of the early years of Columbus was written long after those years had passed away, and in circumstances which did not harmonise with them; second, that there is evidence, both substantive and presumptive, that much of those records, even though it came from the hands of Columbus and his friends, is false and must be discarded; and third, that the only way in which anything like the truth can be arrived at is by circumstantial and presumptive evidence with regard to dates, names, places, and events upon which the obscure life of Columbus impinged. Columbus is known to have written much about himself, but very little of it exists or remains in his own handwriting. It remains in the form of quotation by others, all of whom had their reasons for not representing quite accurately what was, it must be feared, not even itself a candid and accurate record. The evidence for these very serious statements is the subject of numberless volumes and monographs, which cannot be quoted here; for it is my privilege to reap the results, and not to reproduce the material, of the immense research and investigation to which in the last fifty years the life of Columbus has been subjected.

We shall come to facts enough presently; in the meantime we have but the vaguest knowledge of what Columbus did in Lisbon. The one technical possession which he obviously had was knowledge of the sea; he had also a head on his shoulders, and plenty of judgment and common-sense; he had likely picked up some knowledge of cartography in his early years at Genoa, since (having abandoned wool-weaving) he probably wished to make progress in the profession of the sea; and it is, therefore, believed that he picked up a living in Lisbon by drawing charts and maps. Such a living would only be intermittent; a fact that is indicated by his periodic excursions to sea again, presumably when funds were exhausted. There were other Genoese in Lisbon, and his own brother Bartholomew was with him there for a time. He may actually have been there when Columbus arrived; but it is probable that Columbus, the pioneer of the family, seeing a better field for his brother's talent in Lisbon than in Genoa, sent for him when he himself was established

there. This Bartholomew, of whom we shall see a good deal in the future, is merely an outline at this stage of the story; an outline that will later be filled up with human features and fitted with a human character; at present he is but a brother of Christopher, with a rather bookish taste, a better knowledge of cartography than Christopher possessed, and some little experience of the bookselling trade. He too made charts in Lisbon, and sold books also; and no doubt between them the efforts of the brothers, supplemented by the occasional voyages of Christopher, obtained them a sufficient livelihood. The social change, in the one case from the society of Genoese wool-weavers, and in the other from the company of merchant sailors, must have been very great; for there is evidence that they began to make friends and acquaintances among a rather different class than had been formerly accessible to them. The change to a new country also and to a new language makes a deep impression at the age of twenty-five; and although Columbus in his seafarings had been in many ports, and had probably picked up a knowledge both of Portuguese and of Spanish, his establishment in the Portuguese capital could not fail to enlarge his outlook upon life.

But there is absolutely no record of his circumstances in the first years of his life at Lisbon.

CHAPTER V

ADVENTURES BODILY AND SPIRITUAL

COLUMBUS had not been long in Portugal before he was off again to sea, this time on a longer voyage than any he had yet undertaken. Our knowledge of it depends on his own words as reported by Las Casas, and, like so much other knowledge similarly recorded, is not to be received with absolute certainty; but on the whole the balance of probability is in favour of its truth. The words in which this voyage is recorded are given as a quotation from a letter of Columbus, and, stripped of certain obvious interpolations of the historian, are as follows: —"In the month of February, and in the year 1477, I navigated as far as the island of Tile [Thule], a hundred leagues; and to this island, which is as large as England, the English, especially those of Bristol, go with merchandise; and when I was there the sea was not frozen over, although there were very high tides, so much so that in some parts the sea rose twenty-five *brazas*, and went down as much, twice during the day." [1] The reasons for doubting that this voyage took place are due simply to Columbus's habit of being untruthful in regard to his own past doings, and his propensity for drawing the long bow; and the reason that has been accepted by most of his biographers who have denied the truth of this statement is that, in the year 1492, when Columbus was addressing the King and Queen of Spain on his qualifications as a navigator, and when he wished to set forth his experience in a formidable light, he said nothing about this voyage, but merely described his explorations as having extended from Guinea on the south to England on the north. A shrewd estimate of Columbus's character makes it indeed seem incredible that, if he had really been in Iceland, he should not have mentioned the fact on this occasion; and yet there is just one reason, also quite characteristic of Columbus, that would account for the suppression. It is just possible that when he was at Thule, by which he meant Iceland, he may have heard

[1] "Hist. del Almirante," cap. 4.

of the explorations in the direction of Greenland and Newfoundland; and that, although by other navigators these lands were regarded as a part of the continent of Europe, he may have had some glimmerings of an idea that they were part of land and islands in the West; and he was much too jealous of his own reputation as the great and only originator of the project for voyaging to the West, to give away any hints that he was not the only person to whom such ideas had occurred. There is deception and untruth somewhere; and one must make one's choice between regarding the story in the first place as a lie, or accepting it as truth, and putting down Columbus's silence about it on a later occasion to a rare instinct of judicious suppression. There are other facts in his life, to which we shall come later, that are in accordance with this theory. There is no doubt, moreover, that Columbus had a very great experience of the sea, and was one of the greatest practical seamen that have ever lived in history; and it would be foolish to deny, except for the gravest reasons, that he made a voyage to the far North, which was neither unusual at the time nor a very great achievement for a seaman of his experience.

Christopher returned from these voyages, of which we know nothing except the facts that he has given us, towards the end of 1477; and it was probably in the next year that an event very important in his life and career took place. Hitherto there has been no whisper of love in that arduous career of wool-weaving, sailoring, and map-making; and it is not unlikely that his marriage represents the first inspiration of love in his life, for he was, in spite of his southern birth, a cool-blooded man, for whom affairs of the heart had never a very serious interest. But at Lisbon, where he began to find himself with some footing and place in the world, and where the prospect of at least a livelihood began to open out before him, his thoughts took that turn towards domesticity and family life which marks a moment in the development of almost every man. And now, since he has at last to emerge from the misty environment of sea-spray that has veiled him so long from our intimate sight, we may take a close look at him as he was in this year 1478.

Unlike the southern Italians, he was fair in colouring, a man rather above the middle height, large-limbed, of a shapely breadth and proportion, and of a grave and dignified demeanour. His face was ruddy, and inclined to be freckled under the exposure to the sun; his hair at this age still fair and reddish, although in a few years later it turned grey, and became white

while he was still a young man. His nose was slightly aquiline; his face long and rather full; his eyes of a clear blue, with sharply defined eyebrows—seamen's eyes, which get an unmistakable light in them from long staring into the sea distances. Altogether a handsome and distinguished-looking young man, noticeable anywhere, and especially among a crowd of swarthy Portuguese. He was not a lively young man; on the contrary, his manner was rather heavy, and even at times inclined to be pompous; he had a very good opinion of himself, had the clear calculating head and tidy intellectual methods of the able mariner, was shrewd and cautious—in a word, took himself and the world very seriously. A strictly conventional man, as the conventions of his time and race went, probably some of his gayer and lighter-hearted contemporaries thought him a dull enough dog, who would not join in a carouse or a gallant adventure, but would probably get the better of you if he could in any commercial deal. He was a great stickler for the observances of religion; and never a Sunday or feast-day passed, when he was ashore, without finding him, like the dutiful son of the Church that he was, assisting at Mass and Benediction. He was not, indeed, a very attractive or inspiring figure of a man; not the man whose company one would likely have sought very much, or whose conversation one would have found very interesting. A man rather whose character was cast in a large and plain mould, without those many facets which add so much to the brightness of human intercourse, and which attract and reflect the light from other minds; a man who must be tried in large circumstances, and placed in a big setting, if his qualities are to be seen to advantage. . . . I seem to see him walking up from the shop near the harbour at Lisbon towards the convent of Saints; walking gravely and firmly, with a dignified demeanour, with his best clothes on, and glad, for the moment, to be free of his sea acquaintances, and to be walking in the direction of that upper-class world after which he has a secret hankering in his heart. There are a great many churches in Lisbon nearer his house where he might hear Mass on Sundays; but he prefers to walk up to the rich and fashionable convent of Saints, where everybody is well dressed, and where those kindling eyes of his may indulge a cool taste for feminine beauty.

While the chapel bell is ringing other people are hurrying through the sunny Lisbon streets to Mass at the convent.

Among the fashionable throng are two ladies, one young, one middle-aged; they separate at the church door, and the younger one leaves her mother and takes her place in the convent choir. This is Philippa Moñiz, who lives alone with her mother in Lisbon, and amuses herself with her privileges as a *cavaliera*, or dame, in one of the knightly orders attached to the rich convent of Saints. Perhaps she has noticed the tall figure of the young Genoese in the strangers' part of the convent, perhaps not; but his roving blue eye has noticed her, and much is to come of it. The young Genoese continues his regular and exemplary attendance at the divine Office, the young lady is zealous in observing her duties in the choir; some kind friend introduces them; the audacious young man makes his proposals, and, in spite of the melancholy protests of the young lady's exceedingly respectable and highly-connected relatives, the young people are betrothed and actually married before the elders have time to recover breath from their first shock at the absurdity of the suggestion.

There is a very curious fact in connection with his marriage that is worthy of our consideration. In all his voluminous writings, letters, memoirs and journals, Columbus only twice mentions his wife—once in a letter, and once in his will, made at Valladolid many years later, long after her death; in each case the reference is in the bare words "my wife." He who wrote so much, did not write of her; he who boasted so much, never boasted of her; he who bemoaned so much, never bemoaned her. There is a blank silence on his part about everything connected with his marriage and his wife. I like to think that it was because this marriage, which incidentally furnished him with one of the great impulses of his career, was in itself placid and uneventful, and belongs to that mass of happy days that do not make history. Columbus was not a passionate man. I think that love had a very small place in his life, and that the fever of passion was with him brief and soon finished with; but I am sure he was affectionate, and grateful for any affection and tenderness that were bestowed upon him. He was much away too, at first on his voyages to Guinea and afterwards on the business of his petitions to the Portuguese and Spanish Courts; and one need not be a cynic to believe that these absences did nothing to lessen the affection between him and his wife. Finally, their married life was a short one; she died within ten years, and I am sure did not outlive his affections; so that there may be something solemn, some secret memories of the aching joy

and sorrow that her coming into his life and passing out of it brought him, in this silence of Columbus concerning his wife.

This marriage was, in the vulgar idiom of to-day, a great thing for Columbus. It not only brought him a wife; it brought him a home, society, recognition, and a connection with maritime knowledge and adventure that was of the greatest importance to him. Philippa Moñiz Perestrello was the daughter of Bartolomeo Perestrello, who had been appointed hereditary governor of the island of Porto Santo on its colonisation by Prince Henry in 1425 and who had died there in 1457. Her grandfather was Gil Ayres Moñiz, who was secretary to the famous Constable Pereira in the reign of King John I. of Portugal, and is chiefly interesting to us because he founded the chapel of the "Piedad" in the Carmelite Monastery at Lisbon, in which the Moñiz family had the right of interment for ever, and in which the body of Philippa, after her brief pilgrimage in this world was over, duly rested; and whence her son ordered its disinterment and reburial in the church of Santa Clara in San Domingo. Philippa's mother, Isabel Moñiz, was the second or third wife of Perestrello; and after her husband's death she had come to live in Lisbon. She had another daughter, Violante by name, who had married one Mulier, or Muliartes, in Huelva; and a son named Bartolomeo, who was the heir to the governorship of Porto Santo; but as he was only a little boy at the time of his father's death his mother ceded the governorship to Pedro Correa da Cunha, who had married Iseult, the daughter of old Bartolomeo by his first wife. The governorship was thus kept in the family during the minority of Bartolomeo, who resumed it later when he came of age.

This Isabel, mother of Philippa, was a very important acquaintance indeed for Columbus. It must be noted that he left the shop and Bartholomew to take care of themselves or each other, and went to live in the house of his mother-in-law. Columbus seems to have been fortunate in securing the favour of his female relatives-in-law; and it was probably owing to the championship of Philippa's mother that a marriage so much to his advantage ever took place at all. His wife had many distinguished relatives in the neighbourhood of Lisbon; her cousin was archbishop at this very time; but I can neither find that their marriage was celebrated with the archiepiscopal blessing nor that he ever got much help or countenance from the male

members of the Moñiz family. Archbishops even to-day do not much like their pretty cousins marrying a man of Columbus's position, whether you call him a wool-weaver, a sailor, a map-maker, or a bookseller. "Adventurer" is perhaps the truest description of him; and the word was as much distrusted in the best circles in Lisbon in the fifteenth century as it is to-day.

Those of his new relatives, however, who did get to know him soon began to see that Philippa had not made such a bad bargain after all. With the confidence and added belief in himself that the recognition and encouragement of those kind women brought him, Columbus's mind and imagination expanded; and I think it was probably now that he began to wonder if all his knowledge and seamanship, his quite useful smattering of cartography and cosmography, his real love of adventure, and all his dreams and speculations concerning the unknown and uncharted seas, could not be turned to some practical account. His wife's step-sister Iseult and her husband had, moreover, only lately returned to Lisbon from their long residence in Porto Santo; young Bartolomeo Perestrello, her brother, was reigning there in their stead, and no doubt sending home interesting accounts of ships and navigators that put in at Madeira; and all these circumstances would tend to fan the spark of Columbus's desire to have some adventure and glory of his own on the high seas. He would wish to show all these grandees, with whom his marriage had brought him acquainted, that you did not need to be born a Perestrello—or Pallastrelli, as the name was in its original Italian form—to make a name in the world. Donna Isabel, moreover, was never tired of talking about Porto Santo and her dead husband, and of all the voyages and sea adventures that had filled his life. She was obviously a good teller of tales, and had all the old history and traditions of Madeira at her fingers' ends; the story of Robert Machin and Anne Dorset; the story of the isle of Seven Cities; and the black cloud on the horizon that turned out in the end to be Madeira. She told Christopher how her husband, when he had first gone to Porto Santo, had taken there a litter of rabbits, and how the rabbits had so increased that in two seasons they had eaten up everything on the island, and rendered it uninhabitable for some time.

She brought out her husband's sea charts, memoranda and log-books, the sight of which still further inflamed Christopher's curiosity and ambition. The great thing in those days was to discover something, if it was only a cape down the African coast or a rock in the Atlantic. The key to fame, which later took the

form of mechanical invention, and later still of discovery in the region of science, took the form then of actual discovery of parts of the earth's surface. The thing was in the air ; news was coming in every day of something new seen, something new charted. If others had done so much, and the field was still half unexplored, could not he do something also ? It was not an unlikely thought to occur to the mind of a student of sea charts and horizons.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRE KINDLES

THE next step in Columbus's career was a move to Porto Santo, which probably took place very soon after his marriage—that is to say, in the year 1479. It is likely that he had the chance of making a voyage there; perhaps even of commanding a ship, for his experience of the sea and skill as a navigator must by this time have raised him above the rank of an ordinary seaman; and in that case nothing would be more natural than that he should take his young wife with him to visit her brother Bartolomeo, and to see the family property. It is one of the charms of the seaman's profession that he travels free all over the world; and if he has no house or other fixed possessions that need to be looked after, he has the freedom of the world, and can go where he likes free of cost. Porto Santo and Madeira, lying in the track of the busiest trade on the Atlantic coast, would provide Columbus with an excellent base from which to make other voyages; so it was probably with a heart full of eager anticipation for the future, and a sense of quiet happiness in the present, that in the year 1479 Signor Cristoforo Colombo (for he did not yet call himself Señor Cristoval Colon) set out for Porto Santo—a lonely rock some miles north of Madeira. Its southern shore is a long sweeping bay of white sand, with a huddle of sand-hills beyond, and cliffs and peaks of basalt streaked with lava fringing the other shores. When Columbus and his bride arrived there the place was almost as bare as it is to-day. There were the governor's house; the settlement of Portuguese who worked in the mills and sugar-fields; the mills themselves, with the cultivated sugar-fields behind them; and the vineyards, with the dwarf Malmsey vines which Prince Henry had imported from Candia fifty years before. The forest of dragon-trees that had once covered the island was nearly all gone. The wood had all been used either for building, making boats, or for fuel; and on the fruit of the few trees that were left a herd of pigs was fattened. There was frequent communication by boat with Madeira, which was the chief of all the Atlantic

islands, and the headquarters of the sugar trade; and Porto Santo itself was a favourite place of call for passing ships. So that it was by no means lonely for Christopher Columbus and his wife, even if they had not had the society of the governor and his settlement.

We can allow him about three years in Porto Santo, including visits to Madeira and short sea voyages. I think it not unlikely that it was the happiest time of his life. He was removed from the uncomfortable environment of people who looked down upon him because of his obscure birth; he was in an exquisite climate, and living by the seashore, as a sailor loves to do; he got on well with Bartolomeo, who was no doubt glad enough of the company of this grave sailor who had seen so much and had visited so many countries; above all he had his wife there, his beautiful, dear, proud Philippa, all to himself, and out of reach of those abominable Portuguese noblemen who paid so much attention to her and so little to him, and made him so jealous; and there was a whispered promise of some one who was coming to make him happier still. It is a splendid setting, this, for the sea adventurer; a charming picture that one has of him there so long ago, walking on the white shores of the great sweeping bay, with the glorious purple Atlantic sparkling and thundering on the sands as it sparkles and thunders to-day. A place empty and vivid, swept by the mellow winds; silent, but for the continuous roar of the sea; still, but for the scuttling of the rabbits among the sand-hills and the occasional passage of a figure from the mills up to the sugar-fields; but brilliant with sunshine and colour and the bright environment of the sea. It was upon such scenes that he looked during this happy pause in his life; they were the setting of Philippa's dreams and anxieties as the time of motherhood drew near; and it was upon them that their little son first opened his eyes, and with the boom of the Altantic breakers that he first mingled his small voice.

It is but a moment of rest and happiness; for Christopher the scene is soon changed, and he must set forth upon a voyage again while Philippa is left, with a new light in her eyes, to watch over the atom that wakes and weeps and twists and struggles and mews, and sleeps again, in her charge. Sleep well, little son! Yet a little while, and you too shall make voyages and conquests; new worlds lie waiting for you, who are so greatly astonished at this old world; far journeys by land and sea, and

the company of courtiers and kings; and much honour from the name and deeds of him who looked smiling into your eyes, and was so very large and overshadowing! But with her who quietly sings to you, whose hands soothe and caress you, in whose eyes shines that wonderful light of mother's love—only a little while longer.

While Diego, as this son was christened, was yet only a baby in his cradle, Columbus is said to have made an important voyage[1] to the coast of Guinea, as all the western part of the African continent was then called. His solid and practical qualities were by this time beginning to be recognised; and it is possible that he was appointed to a caravel in the expedition which set out for Guinea in December 1481. A few miles from Cape Coast Castle, and on the borders of the Dutch colony, there are to-day the ruined remains of a fort; and it is this fort, the fortress of St George, that the expedition was sent out to erect. On the 11th of December the little fleet set sail from Lisbon—ten caravels, and two barges or lighters laden with the necessary masonry and timber-work for the fort. The fleet was commanded by the Portuguese Admiral Azumbago. They called at Cape Verde, where the Admiral was commissioned to present one of the negro kings with some horses and hawks, and incidentally to obtain his assent to a treaty. On the 19th of January 1482, having made a very good voyage, they landed just beyond the Cape of the Three Points, and immediately set about the business of the expedition.

There was a state reception, with Admiral Azumbago walking in front in scarlet and brocade, followed by his captains dressed in gorgeous tunics and cloaks with golden collars, and, well hidden beneath their finery, good serviceable cuirasses. The banner of Portugal was ceremoniously unfurled and displayed from the top of a tall tree. An altar was erected and consecrated by the chaplain to the expedition, and a mass was sung for the repose of the soul of Prince Henry. The Portugal contingent were then met by Caramansa, the king of the country, who came surrounded by a great guard of blacks armed with assegais, their bodies scantily decorated with monkey fur and palm leaves. The black monarch must have presented a handsome appear-

[1] I give the account of this expedition because all the earlier authorities aver that Columbus joined it. But later research has failed to discover the smallest evidence that he did so.

ance, for his arms and legs were decked with gold bracelets and rings, he had a kind of dog-collar fitted with bells round his neck, and some pieces of gold were daintily twisted into his beard. With these aids to diplomacy, and doubtless also with the help of a dram or two of spirits or of the wine of Oporto, the treaty was soon concluded, and a very shrewd stroke of business accomplished for King John of Portugal; for it gave him the sole right of exchanging gaudy rubbish from Portugal for the precious gold of Ethiopia. When the contents of the two freight-ships had been unloaded, they were beached and broken up, by the orders of King John, who wished it to be thought that they had been destroyed in the whirlpools of that dangerous sea, and that the navigation of those rough waters was only safe for the caravels of the Navy. The fort was built in twenty days, and the expedition returned, laden with gold and ivory; Admiral Azumbago remained behind in command of the garrison.

Columbus went back to Porto Santo with his ambitions thoroughly kindled. He had been sailing with a fleet; he had been down to the mysterious coast of Africa; he had been trafficking with strange tribes; he had been engaged in a difficult piece of navigation such as he loved; and on the long dreamy days of the voyage home, the caravels furrowing the blue Atlantic before the steady trade-wind, he determined that he would find some way of putting his knowledge to use, and of earning distinction for himself. Living, as he had been lately, in Atlantic seaports overlooking the western ocean, it is certain that the idea of discovering something in that direction occupied him more and more. What it was that he was to discover was probably very vague in his mind, and was likely not designated by any name more exact than "lands." In after years he tried to show that it was a logical and scientific deduction which led him to go and seek the eastern shore of the Indian continent by sailing west; but we may be almost certain that at this time he thought of no such thing. He had no exact scientific knowledge at this date. His map-making had taught him something, and naturally he had kept his ears open, and knew all the gossip and hearsay about the islands of the West; and there gradually grew in his mind the intuition or conviction—I refuse to call it an opinion—that, over that blue verge of the West, there was land to be found. How this seed of conviction first lodged in his

mind it would be impossible to say; in any one of the steps through which we have followed him it might have taken its root; but there it was, beginning to occupy his mind very seriously indeed; and he began to look out, as all men do who wish to act upon faith or conviction which they cannot demonstrate to another person, for some proofs that his conviction was a sound one.

And now, just at the moment when he needs it most, comes an incident that, to a man of his religious and superstitious habit, seems like the pointing finger of Providence. The story of the shipwrecked pilot has been discredited by nearly all the modern biographers of Columbus, chiefly because it does not fit in with their theory of his scientific studies and the alleged bearing of these on his great discovery; but it is given by Las Casas, who says that it was commonly believed by Columbus's *entourage* at Hispaniola. Moreover, amid all the tangles of theory and argument in which the achievement of Columbus has been involved, this original story of shipwrecked mariners stands out with a strength and simplicity that cannot be entirely disregarded by the historian who permits himself some light of imagination by which to work. It is more true to life and to nature that Columbus should have received his last impulse, the little push that was to set his accumulated energy and determination in motion, from a thing of pure chance, than that he should have built his achievement up in a logical superstructure resting on a basis of profound and elaborate theory.

In the year following Columbus's return from Guinea, then, he, and probably his family, had gone over to Madeira from Porto Santo, and were staying there. While they were there a small ship put in to Madeira, much battered by storms and bad weather, and manned by a crew of five sick mariners. Columbus, who was probably never far from the shore at Funchal when a ship came into the harbour, happened to see them. Struck by their appearance, and finding them in a quite destitute and grievously invalid condition, he entertained them in his house until some other provision could be made for them. But they were quite worn out. One by one they succumbed to weakness and illness, until one only, a pilot from Huelva, was left. He also was sinking; and when it was obvious that his end was near at hand, he beckoned his good host to his bedside, and, in gratitude for all his kindness, imparted to him some singular knowledge which he had acquired, and with which, if he had lived, he had hoped to win distinction for himself.

The pilot's story, in so far as it has been preserved, and taking the mean of four contemporary accounts of it, was as follows. This man, whose name is doubtful, but is given as Alonso Sánchez, was sailing on a voyage from one of the Spanish ports to England or Flanders. He had a crew of seventeen men. When they had got well out to sea a severe easterly gale sprang up, which drove the vessel before it to the westward. Day after day and week after week, for twenty-eight days, this gale continued. The islands were all left far behind, and the ship was carried into a region far beyond the limits of the ocean marked on the charts. At last they sighted some islands, upon one of which they landed and took in wood and water. The pilot took the bearings of the island, in so far as he was able, and made some observations, the only one of which that has remained being that the natives went naked; and, the wind having changed, set forth on his homeward voyage. This voyage was long and painful. The wind did not hold steady from the west; the pilot and his crew had a very hazy notion of where they were; their dead-reckoning was confused; their provisions fell short; and one by one the crew sickened and died until they were reduced to five or six—the ones who, worn out by sickness and famine, and the labours of working the ship short-handed and in their enfeebled condition, at last made the island of Madeira, and cast anchor in the beautiful bay of Funchal, only to die there. All these things we may imagine the dying man relating in snatches to his absorbed listener, who felt himself to be receiving a pearl of knowledge to be guarded and used, now that its finder must depart upon the last and longest voyage of human discovery. Such observations as he had made—probably a few figures giving the bearings of stars, an account of dead-reckoning, and a quite useless and inaccurate chart or map—the pilot gave to his host; then, having delivered his soul of its secret, he died.

This is the story; not an impossible nor improbable one in its main outlines. Whether the pilot really landed on one of the Antilles is extremely doubtful, although it is possible. Superstitious and storm-tossed sailors in those days were only too ready to believe that they saw some of the fabled islands of the Atlantic; and it is quite possible that the pilot simply announced that he had seen land, and that the details as to his having actually set foot upon it were added later. That does not seem so me important in so far as it concerns Columbus. Whether it were true or not, the man obviously believed it; and to the

mind of Columbus, possessed with an idea and a blind faith in something which could not be seen, the whole incident would appear in the light of a supernatural sign. The bit of paper or parchment with the rude drawing on it, even although it were the drawing of a thing imagined and not of a thing seen, would still have for him a kind of authority that he would find it hard to ignore.

It seems unnecessary to disbelieve this story. It is obviously absurd to regard it as the sole origin of Columbus's great idea; it probably belongs to that order of accidents, small and unimportant in themselves, which are so often associated with the beginnings of mighty events.

Walking on the shore at Madeira or Porto Santo, his mind brooding on the great and growing idea, Columbus would remember one or two other instances which, in the light of his growing conviction and knowledge, began to take on a significant hue. He remembered that his wife's relative, Pedro Correa, who had come back from Porto Santo while Columbus was living in Lisbon, had told him about some strange flotsam that came in upon the shores of the island. He had seen a piece of wood of a very dark colour, curiously carved, but not with any tool of metal; and some great canes had also come ashore, so big that every joint would hold a gallon of wine. These canes, which were utterly unlike anything known in Europe or the islands of the Atlantic, had been looked upon as such curiosities that they had been sent to the king at Lisbon, where they remained, and where Columbus himself afterwards saw them. Two other stories, which he heard also at this time, went to strengthen his convictions. One was the tale of Martin Vincenti, a pilot in the Portuguese Navy, who had found in the sea, four hundred and twenty leagues to the west of Cape St Vincent, another piece of wood, curiously carved, that had evidently not been laboured with an iron instrument. Columbus also remembered that the inhabitants of the Azores had more than once found upon their coasts the trunks of huge pine-trees, and strangely-shaped canoes carved out of single logs; and, most significant of all, the people of Flores had taken from the water the bodies of two dead men, whose faces were of a strange broad shape, and whose features differed from those of any known race of mankind. All these objects, it was supposed, were brought by westerly winds to the shores of Europe; it was not till long afterwards, when the currents of the Altantic came to be studied, that the presence of such flotsam came to be attributed to the

ocean currents, deflected by the Cape of Good Hope and gathered in the Gulf of Mexico, which are sprayed out across the Atlantic.

The idea once fixed in his mind that there was land at a not impossible distance to the west, the next thing was to go and discover it. Rather a formidable task for a man without money, a foreigner in a strange land, among people who looked down upon him because of his obscure birth, and with no equipment except a knowledge of the sea, a great mastery of the art and craft of seamanship, a fearless spirit of adventure, and an inner light! Some one else would have to be convinced before anything could be done, somebody who would provide ships and men and money and provisions. Altogether rather a large order; although it was not unusual in those days for master mariners, tired of the shore, to suggest to some grandee or other the desirability of fitting out a ship or two to go in search of the isle of St Brandan, or to look up Antilia, or the island of the Seven Cities. It was very hard to get an audience even for such a reasonable scheme as that; but to suggest taking a flotilla straight out to the west and into the Sea of Darkness, down that curving hill of the sea which it might be easy enough to slide down, but up which it was thought that no ship could ever climb again, was a thing that hardly any serious or well-informed person would listen to. A young man from Genoa, without a knowledge either of the classics or of the Fathers, and with no other argument except his own fixed belief and some vague talk about bits of wood and shipwrecked mariners, was not the person to inspire the capitalists of Portugal.

Yet the thing had to be done. Obviously it could not be done at Porto Santo, where there were no ships and no money. Influence must be used; and Columbus knew that his proposals, if they were to have even a chance of being listened to, must be presented in some high-flown and elaborate form, giving reasons and offering inducements and quoting authorities. He would have to get some one to help him in that; he would have to get up some scientific facts; his brother Bartholomew could help him, and some of those disagreeable relatives-in-law must also be pressed into the service of the Idea. Obviously the first thing was to go back to Lisbon; which accordingly Columbus did about the year 1483.

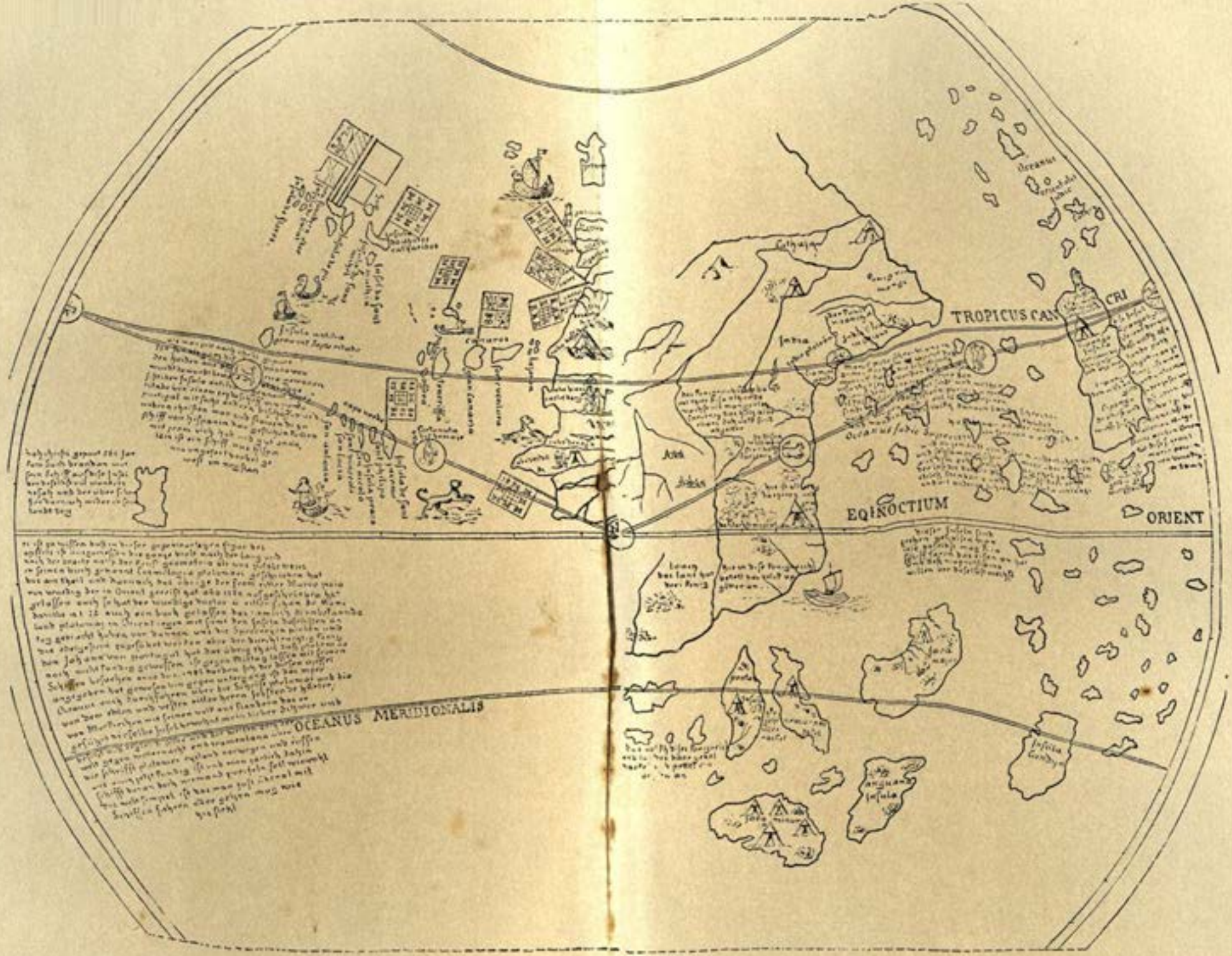
CHAPTER VII

WANDERINGS WITH AN IDEA

THE man to whom Columbus proposed to address his request for means with which to make a voyage of discovery was no less a person than the new King of Portugal. Columbus was never a man of petty or small ideas; if he were going to do a thing at all, he went about it in a large and comprehensive way; and all his life he had a way of going to the fountain-head, and of making flights and leaps where other men would only climb or walk, that had much to do with his ultimate success. King John, moreover, had shown himself thoroughly sympathetic to the spirit of discovery; Columbus, as we have seen, had added considerably to his experience as seaman, trader and traveller; and he rightly thought that, since he had to ask the help of some one in his enterprise, he might as well try to enlist the Crown itself in the service of his great Idea.

He was not prepared, however, to go directly to the King and ask for ships; his proposal would have to be put in a way that would appeal to the royal ambition, and would also satisfy the King that there was really a destination in view for the expedition. In other words, Columbus had to propose to go somewhere; it would not do to say that he was going west into the Atlantic Ocean to look about him. He therefore devoted all his energies to putting his proposal on what is called a business footing, and expressing his vague, sublime Idea in common and practical terms.

The people who probably helped him most in this were his brother Bartholomew and perhaps Behaim, the great authority on scientific navigation, who had been living in Lisbon for some time and with whom Columbus was acquainted. Behaim, who was at this time about forty-eight years of age, was born at Nuremberg, and was a pupil of Regiomontanus, the great German astronomer. A very interesting man, this, if we could decipher his features and character; no mere star-gazing visionary, but a man of the world, whose scientific lore was com-



BEHAIM'S GLOBE

bined with a wide and liberal experience of life. He was not only a student of cosmography and astronomy, but he had a genius for mechanics and made beautiful instruments; he was a merchant also, and combined a little business with his scientific travels. He had been employed at Lisbon in adapting the astrolabe of Regiomontanus for the use of sailors at sea; and in these labours he was assisted by two people who were destined to have a weighty influence on the career of Columbus—Doctors Rodrigo and Joseph, physicians or advisers to the King, and men of great academic reputation. He had just come back from an expedition on which he had been despatched, with Rodrigo and Joseph, to take the altitude of the sun in Guinea.[1]

Columbus was not the man to neglect his opportunities; and there can be no doubt that as soon as his purpose had established itself in his mind he made use of every opportunity that presented itself for improving his meagre scientific knowledge, in order that his proposal might be set forth in a plausible form. In other words, he got up the subject. The whole of his geographical reading with regard to the Indies up to this time had been in the travels of Marco Polo; the others whose works he quoted from so freely in later years were then known to him only by name, if at all. Behaim, however, could tell him a good deal about the supposed circumference of the earth, the extent of the Asiatic continent, and so on. Every new fact that Columbus heard he seized and pressed into the service of his Idea; where there was a choice of facts, or difference of opinion between scientists, he chose the facts that were most convenient, and the opinions that fitted best with his own beliefs. The very word "Indies" was synonymous with unbounded wealth; there certainly would be riches to tempt the King with; and Columbus, being a religious man, hit also on the happy idea of setting forth the spiritual glory of carrying the light of faith across the Sea of Darkness, and making of the heathen a heritage for the Christian Church. So that, what with one thing and another, he soon had his proposals formally arranged.

Imagine him, then, actually at Court, and having an audience of the King, who could scarcely believe his ears. Here was a man actually proposing to sail out into the Western Atlantic

[1] Behaim, alas, is among the heroes who have suffered from modern criticism. Its tendency is to look upon him as rather a fraud.

and to cross the unknown part of the world. Certainly his proposals seemed plausible, but still——. The earth was round, said Columbus, and therefore there was a way from East to West and from West to East. The prophet Esdras, a scientific authority that even His Majesty would hardly venture to doubt, had laid it down that only one-seventh of the earth was covered by the waters.[1] From this fact Columbus deduced that the maritime space extending westward from the shores of Europe could not be very large; and by sailing westward he proposed to reach, at a not unreasonable distance, *certain lands* of which he claimed to have knowledge.[2] The sailors' tales, the logs of driftwood, the dead bodies, were all brought into the proposals; in short, if His Majesty would grant some ships, and consent to making Columbus Admiral over all the islands that he might discover, with full viceregal state, authority, and profit, he would go and discover them.

There are two different accounts of what the King said when this proposal was made to him. According to some authorities John was impressed by Columbus's proposals, and inclined to provide him with the necessary ships, but he could not assent to all the titles and rewards which Columbus demanded as a price for his services. Barros, the Portuguese historian, on the other hand, represents that the whole idea was too fantastic to be seriously entertained by the King for a moment, and that although he at once made up his mind to refuse the request he preferred to delegate his refusal to a commission. Whatever may be the truth as to King John's opinions, the commission was certainly appointed, and consisted of three persons, to wit: Master Rodrigo, Master Joseph the Jew, and Diogo Ortiz de Vilhegas, Bishop of Tanger.

Before these three learned men must Columbus now appear, a little less happy in his mind, and wishing that he knew more Latin. Rodrigo, Joseph the Jew, the Right Reverend Diogo Ortiz: three pairs of cold eyes turned rather haughtily on the

[1] The verses containing this statement are to be found in the Apocrypha, 2 Esdras vi. 42, 47:—"Upon the third day thou didst command that the waters should be gathered in the seventh part of the earth: six parts hast thou dried up, and kept them, to the intent that of these some being planted of God and tilled might serve thee. . . . Upon the fifth day thou saidst unto the seventh part, where the waters were gathered, that it should bring forth living creatures, fowls and fishes; and so it came to pass."

[2] The island of Antilia.

Genoese adventurer; three brains much steeped in learning directed in judgment on the Idea of a man with no learning at all. The right reverend gentleman, being the King's confessor, and a bishop into the bargain, could speak on that matter of converting the heathen; and he was of opinion that it could not be done. Joseph the Jew, having made voyages, and worked with Behaim at the astrolabe, was surely an authority on navigation; and he was of opinion that it could not be done. Rodrigo, being a doctor of medicine, had read many books which Columbus had not read; and he was of opinion that it could not be done. Three learned opinions against one Idea; the Idea is bound to go. They would no doubt question Columbus on the scientific aspect of the matter, and would soon discover his grievous lack of academic knowledge. They would quote fluently passages from writers that he had not heard of; if he had not heard of them, they seemed to imply, no wonder he made such foolish proposals. Poor Columbus stands there puzzled, dissatisfied, tongue-tied. He cannot answer these wiseacres in their own learned lingo; what they say, or what they quote, may be true or it may not, but it has nothing to do with his Idea. If he opens his mouth to justify himself, they refute him with arguments that he does not understand; there is a wall between them. More than a wall; there is a world between them! It is his *credo* against their *ignoro*; it is his *expecto* against their *non video*. Yet in his *credo* there lies a power of which they do not dream; and it rings out in a trumpet note across the centuries, saluting the life force that opposes its irresistible "I will" to the feeble "Thou canst not" of the worldly-wise. Thus, in about the year 1484, did three learned men sit in judgment upon our ignorant Christopher. Three learned men: Doctors Rodrigo, Joseph the Jew, and the Right Reverend Diogo Ortiz de Vilhegas; three men stuffed to the eyes and ears with learning; stuffed so full indeed that eyes and ears are closed with it. And three men, it would appear, wholly destitute of mother-wit.

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After all his preparations this rebuff must have been a serious blow to Columbus. It was not his only trouble, moreover. During the last year he had been earning nothing; he was already in imagination the Admiral of the Ocean Seas; and in the anticipation of the much higher duties to which he hoped to be devoted it is not likely that he would continue at his humble task of

making maps and charts. The result was that he got into debt, and it was absolutely necessary that something should be done. But a darker trouble had also almost certainly come to him about this time. Neither the day nor the year of Philippa's death is known; but it is likely that it occurred soon after Columbus's failure at the Portuguese Court, and immediately before his departure into Spain. That anonymous life, fulfilling itself so obscurely in companionship and motherhood, as softly as it floated upon the page of history, as softly fades from it again. Those kind eyes, that encouraging voice, that helping hand and friendly human soul are with him no longer; and after the interval of peace and restful growth that they afforded, Christopher must strike his tent and go forth upon another stage of his pilgrimage with a heavier and sterner heart.

Two things are left to him: his son Diego, now an articulate little creature with character and personality of his own, and with strange, heart-breaking reminiscences of his mother in voice and countenance and manner—that is one possession; the other is his Idea. Two things alive and satisfactory, amid the ruin and loss of other possessions; two reasons for living and prevailing. And these two possessions Columbus took with him when he set out for Spain in the year 1485.

Whether he went to Spain by land or by sea we do not know, but the port of Palos was his first destination in Spain. Two reasons drew him there. At the town of Huelva, about three miles from the port, there lived a sister of Philippa's who had married a Spaniard named Muliartes. Some one had to look after Diego, and this sister-in-law would probably undertake the task. And, furthermore, Palos was the principal port used by the mariners trading in the Atlantic, between Spain and the Azores and the Canaries. The story of the pilot who had seen the unknown land was known at Palos; and there was a monk at a convent near by there, one Marchena, who, according to one historian at least,[1] was a Portuguese or had been in Portugal, where he very likely met Columbus and discussed with him the probabilities of the pilot's unknown land. But we do not know for certain what guided Columbus's first steps in Spain. The facts are that instead of going to Huelva he went first to this monastery of La Rabida three miles away; and in doing so took a step which was destined to have a most profoundly important influence on his career and on the destinies of the world.

[1] Remon, F. Alonso. "Historia General de la Orden de Nuestra Senora de la Merced Redencion de Cautivos." Madrid, 1618.

CHAPTER VIII

COLUMBUS IN SPAIN

AT about a day's journey from Huelva, where the general slope of the land begins to fall towards the sea, two small rivers, the Odiel and the Tinto, which have hitherto been making music each for itself through the pleasant valleys and vineyards of Andalusia, join forces, and run with a deeper stream towards the sea at Palos. The town of Palos lay on the banks of the river; a little to the south of it, and on the brow of a rocky promontory dark with pine-trees, there stood the convent of Our Lady of La Rabida. Stood, on this winter evening early in the year 1485; had stood in some form or other, and used for varying purposes, for many years and centuries before that, even to the time of the Romans; and still stands, a silent and neglected place, yet to be visited and seen by such as are curious. To the door of this place comes Christopher as darkness falls, urged thereto by the plight of Diego, who is tired and hungry. Christopher rings the bell, and asks the porter for a little bread and water for the child, and a lodging for them both. There is some talk at the door; the Franciscan lay brother being given, at all times in the history of his order, to the pleasant indulgence of gossiping conversation, when that is lawful; and the presence of a stranger, who speaks with a foreign accent, being at all times an incident of interest and even of excitement in the quiet life of a monastery. The moment is one big with import to the human race; it marks a period in the history of our man; the scene is worth calling up. Dark night, with sea breezes moaning in the pine-trees, outside; raying light from within falling on the lay brother leaning in the doorway and on the two figures standing without: on Christopher, grave, subdued, weary, yet now as always of pleasant and impressive address, and on the small boy who stands beside him round-eyed and expectant, his fatigue for the moment forgotten in curiosity and anticipation.

While they are talking comes no less a person than the Prior of the monastery, Friar Juan Perez, bustling round, good-natured busybody that he is, to see what is all this talk at the

door. The Prior, as is the habit of monks, begins by asking questions. What is the stranger's name? Where does he come from? Where is he going to? What is his business? Is the little boy his son? He has actually come from Santa Fé? The Prior, loving talk after the manner of his kind, sees in this grave and smooth-spoken stranger rich possibilities of talk; possibilities that cannot possibly be exhausted to-night, it being now hard on the hour for Compline; the stranger must come in and rest for to-night at least, and possibly for several nights. There is much bustle and preparation; the travellers are welcomed with monkish hospitality; Christopher, we may be sure, goes and hears the convent singing Compline, and offers up devout prayers for a quiet night and for safe conduct through this vale of tears; and goes thankfully to bed with the plainsong echoing in his ears, and some stoic sense that all days, however hard, have an evening, and all journeys an end.

The result of this visit was undoubtedly to confirm Columbus in his idea of the existence of lands in the western Atlantic. In both Juan Perez and Marchena, who had no doubt heard much of the maritime gossip of the port, he found warm supporters of his Idea. He found in them more than supporters, he found in them good friends; with the result that instead of taking Diego to Huelva he decided to leave him in the care of these good brothers to be looked after and educated, while Columbus himself, now without human encumbrances of any kind, was able to set out into Spain and devote himself solely to the futherance of his quest.

For this purpose he went first to Seville, where he attached himself for a little while to a group of his countrymen who were settled there, among them Antonio and Alessandro Geraldini, and made such momentary living as was possible to him by his old trade. But the Idea would not sleep. He talked of nothing else; and as men do who talk of an idea that possesses them wholly, and springs from the inner light of faith, he interested and impressed many of his hearers. Some of them suggested one thing, some another; but every one was agreed that it would be a good thing if he could enlist the services of the great Count (afterwards Duke) of Medina Celi, who had a palace at Rota, near Cadiz.

This nobleman was one of the most famous of the grandees of Spain, and lived in mighty state upon his territory along the seashore, serving the Crown in its wars and expeditions with

LA RABIDA

the power and dignity of an ally rather than of a subject. His domestic establishment was on a princely scale, filled with chamberlains, gentlemen-at-arms, knights, retainers, and all the panoply of social dignity; and there was also place in his household for persons of merit and in need of protection. To this great man came Columbus with his Idea. It attracted the Count, who was a judge of men and perhaps of ideas also; and Columbus, finding some hope at last in his attitude, accepted the hospitality offered to him, and remained at Rota through the winter of 1485-86. He had not been very hopeful when he arrived there, and had told the Count that he had thought of going to the King of France and asking for help from him; but the Count, who found something respectable and worthy of consideration in the Idea of a man who thought nothing of a journey in its service from one country to another and one sovereign to another, detained him, and played with the Idea himself. Three or four caravels were nothing to the Count of Medina Celi; but on the other hand the man was a grandee and a diplomat, with a nice sense of etiquette and of what was due to a reigning house. Either there was nothing in this Idea, in which case his caravels would be employed to no purpose, or there was so much in it that it was an undertaking, not merely for the Count of Medina Celi, but for the Crown of Castile. Lands across the ocean, and untold gold and riches therefrom, suggested complications with foreign Powers, and transactions with the Pope himself, that would probably be a little too much even for the good Count; therefore with a curious mixture of far-sighted generosity and shrewd security he wrote to Queen Isabella, recommending Columbus to her, and asking her to consider his Idea; asking her also, in case anything should come of it, to remember him (the Count), and to let him have a finger in the pie. Thus, with much literary circumstance and elaboration of politeness, the Count of Medina Celi to Queen Isabella (1485).

Follows an interval of suspense, the beginning of a long discipline of suspense to which Columbus was to be subjected; and presently comes a favourable reply from the Queen, commanding that Columbus should be sent to her. Early in 1486 he set out for Cordova, where the Court was then established, bearing another letter from the Count in which his own private requests were repeated, and perhaps a little emphasised. Columbus was lodged in the house of Alonso de Quintanilla, Treasurer to the Crown of Castile, there to await an audience with Queen Isabella.

While he is waiting, and getting accustomed to his new surroundings, let us consider these two monarchs in whose presence he is soon to appear, and upon whose decision hangs some part of the world's destiny. Isabella first; for in that strange duet of government it is her womanly soprano that rings most clearly down the corridors of Time. We discern in her a very busy woman, living a difficult life with much tact and judgment, and exercising to some purpose that amiable taste for "doing good" that marks the virtuous lady of station in every age. This, however, was a woman who took risks with her eyes open, and steered herself cleverly in perilous situations, and guided others with a firm hand also, and in other ways made good her claim to be a ruler. The consent and the will of her people were her great strength; by them she dethroned her niece and ascended the throne of Castile. Her chief fault was the common one of being too much under the influence of her confessors; but it was a fault that was rarely allowed to disturb the balance of her judgment. Thus she opposed the expulsion of the Jews and the establishment of the Inquisition. She had, indeed, the misfortune to be at variance with her husband in almost every matter of policy dear to his heart; but when she failed to get her way, she was still able to preserve her harmonious relations with her husband without disagreement and with happiness. She liked clever people; surrounded herself with men of letters and of science, fostered all learned institutions, and delighted in the details of civil administration. A very dignified and graceful figure, that could equally adorn a Court drawing-room or a field of battle; for she actually went into the field, and wore armour as becomingly as silk and ermine. Firm, constant, clever, alert, a little given to fussiness perhaps, but sympathetic and charming, with some claims to genius and some approach to grandeur of soul: so much we may say truly of her inner self. Outwardly she was a woman well formed, of medium height, a very dignified and graceful carriage, eyes of a clear summer blue, and the red and gold of autumn in her hair—these last inherited from her English grandmother.

Of Ferdinand of Aragon it has been said, not quite fairly, that he never thought well of Columbus or of his proposals; that when he finally consented to the expedition he did so with only half a heart, and against his judgment. Why, then, should he have given Columbus any support at all? He was an enterprising, subtle, courageous, and, by our notions, a dishonest man; that is to say, his standards of honour were not

those which we can accept nowadays. He thought nothing of going back on a promise, provided he got a priestly dispensation to do so; he juggled with his Cabinets, and stopped at nothing in order to get his way; he had a craving ambition, and was lacking in magnanimity; he loved dominion, and cared very little for glory. A very capable man; so capable that in spite of his defects he was regarded by his subjects as wise and prudent; so capable that he used his weaknesses of character to strengthen and further the purposes of his reign. A very cold man also, quick and sure in his judgments, of wide understanding and grasp of affairs; simple and austere in dress and diet, as austerity was counted in that period of splendour; extremely industrious, and close in his observations and judgments of men. To the bodily eye he appeared as a man of middle size, sturdy and athletic, face burned a brick-red with exposure to the sun and open air; hair and eyebrows of a bright chestnut; a well-formed and not unkindly mouth; a voice sharp and unmelodious, issuing in quick, fluent speech. This was the man that earned from the Pope, for himself and his successors, the title of "Most Catholic Majesty."

The Queen was very busy indeed with military preparations; but in the midst of her interviews with nobles and officers, contractors and state officials, she snatched a moment to receive the person Christopher Columbus. With that extreme mental agility which is characteristic of busy sovereigns all the force of this clever woman's mind was turned for a moment on Christopher, whose Idea had by this time invested him with a dignity which no amount of regal state could abash. There was very little time. The Queen heard what Columbus had to say, cutting him short, it is likely, with kindly tact, and suppressing his tendency to launch out into long-winded speeches. What she saw she liked; and, being too busy to give to this proposal the attention that it obviously merited, she told Columbus that the matter would be fully gone into and that in the meantime he must regard himself as the guest of the Court. And so, in the countenance of a smile and a promise, Columbus bows himself out. For the present he must wait a little and his hot heart must contain itself while other affairs, looming infinitely larger than his Idea on the royal horizon, receive the attention of the Court.

It was not the happiest moment, indeed, in which to talk

of ships and charts, and lonely sea roads, and far-away undiscovered shores. Things at home were very real and lively in those spring days at Cordova. The war against the Moors had reached a critical stage; King Ferdinand was away laying siege to the city of Loxa, and though the Queen was at Cordova she was entirely occupied with the business of collecting and forwarding troops and supplies to his aid. The streets were full of soldiers; nobles and grandees from all over the country were arriving daily with their retinues; glitter and splendour, and the pomp of warlike preparation, filled the city. Early in June the Queen herself went to the front and joined her husband in the siege of Moclin; and when this was victoriously ended, and they had returned in triumph to Cordova, they had to set out again for Galicia to suppress a rebellion there. When that was over they did not come back to Cordova at all, but repaired at once to Salamanca to spend the winter there.

At the house of Alonso de Quintanilla, however, Columbus was not altogether wasting his time. He met there some of the great persons of the Court, among them the celebrated Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo and Grand Cardinal of Spain. This was far too great a man to be at this time anything like a friend of Columbus; but Columbus had been presented to him; the Cardinal would know his name, and what his business was; and that is always a step towards consideration. Cabrero, the royal Chamberlain, was also often a fellow-guest at the Treasurer's table; and with him Columbus contracted something like a friendship. Every one who met him liked him; his dignity, his simplicity of thought and manner, his experience of the sea, and his calm certainty and conviction about the stupendous thing which he proposed to do, could not fail to attract the liking and admiration of those with whom he came in contact. In the meantime a committee appointed by the Queen sat upon his proposals. The committee met under the presidentship of Hernando de Talavera, the Prior of the monastery of Santa Maria del Prado, near Valladolid, a pious ecclesiastic, who had the rare quality of honesty, and who was therefore a favourite with Queen Isabella; she afterwards created him Archbishop of Granada. He was not, however, poor honest soul! quite the man to grasp and grapple with this wild scheme for a voyage across the ocean. Once more Columbus, as in Portugal, set forth his views with eloquence and conviction; and once more, at the tribunal of learning, his unlearned proposals were examined and played with. By some Columbus's

Idea was regarded as scientifically impossible; others thought that it came perilously near to heresy, in its assumption of a state of affairs that was clearly at variance with the writings of the Fathers and the sacred Scriptures themselves.

But although no decision was arrived at, the delay did not find Columbus in such unhappy circumstances as those in which he left Portugal. He had important friends now, who were willing and anxious to help him, and among them was one to whom he turned, in his profound depression, for religious and friendly consolation. This was Diego de Deza, Prior of the Dominican convent of San Estevan at Salamanca, who was also professor of theology in the university there and tutor to the young Prince Juan. Of all those who came in contact with Columbus at this time this man seems to have understood him best, and to have realised where his difficulty lay. Like many others who are consumed with a burning idea, Columbus was very probably at this time in danger of becoming possessed with it like a monomaniac; and his new friends saw that if he were to make any impression upon the conservative learning of the time, to which a decision in such matters was always referred, he must have some opportunity for friendly discussion with learned men who were not inimical to him, and who were not in the position of judges examining a man arraigned before them and pleading for benefits.

When the Court went to Salamanca at the end of 1486, Deza arranged that Columbus should go there too, and he lodged him in a country farm called Valcuebo, which belonged to his convent and was equidistant from it and the city. Here the good Dominican fathers came and visited him, bringing with them professors from the university, who perhaps discussed with Columbus his theories and ambitions, and, himself all-conscious, communicated new knowledge to him, and quietly put him right on many a scientific point. There were professors of cosmography and astronomy in the university, familiar with the works of Alfraganus and Regiomontanus. It is likely that it was at this time that Columbus became possessed of d'Ailly's "Imago Mundi," which little volume contained a popular résumé of the scientific views of Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy, and others, and was from this time forth Columbus's constant companion.

Here at Valcuebo, and later, when winter came, in the great hall of the Dominican convent at Salamanca, known as the "De Profundis" hall, where the monks received guests and

held discussions, the Idea of Columbus was ventilated and examined. He heard what friendly sceptics had to say about it; he saw the kind of argument that he would have to oppose to the existing scientific and philosophical knowledge on cosmography. There is no doubt that he learnt a good deal at this time; and more important even than this, he got his project known and talked about; and he made powerful friends, who were afterwards to be of great use to him. The Marquesa de Moya, wife of his friend Cabrero, took a great liking to him; and as she was one of the oldest and closest friends of the Queen, it is likely that she spoke many a good word for Columbus in Isabella's ear.

By the time the Court moved to Cordova, early in 1487, Columbus was once more hopeful of getting a favourable hearing. He followed the Court to Cordova, where he received a gracious message from the Queen to the effect that she had not forgotten him, and that as soon as her military preoccupations permitted it, she would go once more, and more fully, into his proposals. In the meantime he was attached to the Court, and received an occasional payment of 3000 maravedis.[1] It seemed as though the unfavourable decision of Talavera's committee had been forgotten.

In the meantime Isabella followed Ferdinand to the siege of Malaga; and as there were intervals in which other than military business might be transacted, Columbus was ordered to follow them, in case his affairs should come up for consideration. They did not; but the man himself had an experience that may have helped to keep his thoughts from brooding too much on his unfulfilled ambition. Years afterwards, when far away on lonely seas, amid the squalor of a little ship and the staggering buffets of a gale, there would surely sometimes leap into his memory a brightly-coloured picture of this scene in the fertile valley of Malaga: the silken pavilions of the Court, the great encampment of nobility with its arms and banners extending in a semicircle to the seashore, all glistening and moving in the bright sunshine. There was added excitement at this time at an attempt to assassinate Ferdinand and Isabella, a fanatic Moor having crept up to one of the pavilions and aimed a blow at two people whom he mistook for the King and Queen. They turned out to be Don Alvaro de Portugal, who

[1] The value of 1000 maravedis in the fifteenth century was about 15 francs, or 3 dollars, or 12 shillings; and their purchasing power would be about six times that of these sums to-day.

was dangerously wounded, and Columbus's friend, the Marquesa de Moya, who was unhurt; but it was felt that the King and Queen had had a narrow escape. The siege was raised on the 18th of August, and the sovereigns were to spend the winter at Zaragoza; and Columbus, once more condemned to wait, went back to Cordova.

It was here that he contracted his second, and, so far as we know, his last romantic attachment. The long idle days of summer and autumn at Cordova, empty of all serious occupation, gave nature an opportunity for indulging her passion for life and continuity. Among Christopher's friends at Cordova was the family of Arana, friendly hospitable souls, by some accounts noble and by others not noble, and certainly in somewhat poor circumstances, who had welcomed him to their house, listened to his plans with enthusiasm, and formed a life-long friendship with him. Three members of this family are known to us—two brothers, Diego and Pedro, both of whom commanded ships in Columbus's expeditions, and a sister, Beatriz. Columbus was now a man of six and thirty, while she was little more than a girl; he was handsome and winning, distinguished by the daring and importance of his scheme, full of thrilling and romantic talk of distant lands; a very interesting companion, we may be sure. No wonder she fell in love with Christopher; no wonder that he, feeling lonely and depressed by the many postponements of his suit at Court, and in need of sympathy and encouragement, fell in these blank summer days into an intimacy that flamed into a brief but happy passion. Why Columbus never married Beatriz de Arana we cannot be sure, for it is beyond doubt that his first wife had died some time before. Perhaps he feared to involve himself in any new or embarrassing ties; perhaps he loved unwillingly, and against his reason; perhaps—although the suggestion is not a happy one—he by this time did not think poor Beatriz good enough for the Admiral-elect of the Ocean Seas; perhaps (and more probably) Beatriz was already married and deserted, for she bore the surname of Enriquez; and in that case, there being no such thing as a divorce in the Catholic Church, she must either sin or be celibate. But however that may be, there was an uncanonical alliance between them which evidently did not in the least scandalise her brothers, and which resulted in the birth of Ferdinand Columbus in the following year. Christopher,

so communicative and discursive upon some of his affairs, is as reticent about Beatriz as he was about Philippa. Beatriz shares with his legitimate wife the curious distinction of being spoken of by Columbus to posterity only in his will, which was executed at Valladolid the day before he died. In the dry ink and vellum of that ancient legal document is his only record of these two passions. The reference to Beatriz is as follows :—

"And I direct him [Diego] to make provision for Beatriz Enriquez, mother of D. Fernando, my son, that she may be able to live honestly, being a person to whom I am under very great obligation. And this shall be done for the satisfaction of my conscience, because this matter weighs heavily upon my soul. The reason for which it is not fitting to write here."[1]

About the condition of Beatriz, temporal and spiritual, there has been much controversy; but where the facts are all so buried and inaccessible it is unseemly to agitate a veil which we cannot lift, and behind which Columbus himself sheltered this incident of his life. "Acquainted with poverty" is one fragment of fact concerning her that has come down to us; acquainted also with love and with happiness, it would seem, as many poor persons undoubtedly are. Enough for us to know that in the city of Cordova there lived a woman, rich or poor, gentle or humble, married or not married, who brought for a time love and friendly companionship into the life of Columbus; that she gave what she had for giving, without stint or reserve, and that she became the mother of a son who inherited much of what was best in his father, and but for whom the world would be in even greater darkness than it is on the subject of Christopher himself. And so no more of Beatriz Enriquez de Arana, whom (1520) "God has in his keeping"—and has had now these many centuries of Time.

Thus passed the summer and autumn of 1487; precious months, precious years slipping by, and the great purpose as yet unfulfilled and seemingly no nearer to fulfilment. It is likely that Columbus kept up his applications to the Court, and received polite and delaying replies. The next year came, and the Court migrated from Zaragoza to Murcia, from Murcia to Valladolid, from Valladolid to Medina del Campo. Columbus attended it in one or other of these places, but without result. In August Beatriz gave birth to a son, who was christened Ferdinand, and who lived to be a great comfort to his father,

if not to her also. But the miracle of paternity was not now so new and wonderful as it had been; the battle of life, with its crosses and difficulties, was thick about him; and perhaps he looked into this new-comer's small face with conflicting thoughts and memories of the long white beach and the crashing surf at Porto Santo, and regret for things lost—so strangely mingled and inconsistent are the threads of human thought. At last he decided to turn his face elsewhere. In September 1488 he went to Lisbon, for what purpose it is not certain; possibly in connection with the affairs of his dead wife; and probably also in the expectation of seeing his brother Bartholomew, to whom we may now turn our attention for a moment.

After the failure of Columbus's proposals to the King of Portugal in 1486, and the break-up of his home there, Bartholomew had also left Lisbon. Bartholomew Diaz, a famous Portuguese navigator, was leaving for the African coast in August, and Bartholomew Columbus is said to have joined his small expedition of three caravels. As they neared the latitude of the cape which he was trying to make, he ran into a gale which drove him a long way out of his course, west and south. The wind veered round from north-east to north-west, and he did not strike the land again until May 1487. When he did so his crew insisted upon his returning, as they declined to go any farther south. He therefore turned to the west, and then made the startling discovery that in the course of the tempest he had been blown round the cape, and that the land he had made was to the eastward of it; and he therefore rounded it on his way home. He arrived back in Lisbon in December 1488, when Columbus met his brother again, and was present at the reception of Diaz by the King of Portugal. They had a great deal to tell each other, these two brothers; in the two years and a half that had gone since they had parted a great deal had happened to them; and they both knew a good deal more about the great question in which they were interested than they had known when last they talked.

It is to this period that I attribute the inception, if not the execution, of the forgery of the Toscanelli correspondence, if, as I believe, it was a forgery. Christopher's unpleasant experiences before learned committees and commissions had convinced him that unless he were armed with some authoritative and documentary support for his theories they had little chance

of acceptance by the learned. The Idea was right; he knew that; but before he could convince the academic mind, he felt that it must have the *imprimatur* of a mind whose learning could not be impugned. Therefore it is not an unfair guess—and it can be nothing more than a guess—that Christopher and Bartholomew at this point laid their heads together, and decided that the next time Christopher had to appear before a commission he would have something in reserve. It was a risky thing to do, and must in any case be used only as a very last resource; which would account for the fact that the Toscanelli correspondence was never used at all, and is not mentioned in any known document written during Columbus's lifetime.[1]

But these summers and winters of suspense are at last drawing to a close, and we must follow Christopher rapidly through them until the hour of his triumph. He was back in Spain in the spring of 1489, his travelling expenses being defrayed out of the royal purse; and a little later he was once more amid scenes of war at the siege of Baza, and, if report is true, taking a hand himself, not without distinction. It was there that he saw the two friars from the convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, who brought a message from the Grand Soldan of Egypt, threatening the destruction of the Sepulchre if the Spanish sovereigns did not desist from the war against Granada; and it was there that in his simple and pious mind he formed the resolve that if ever his efforts should be crowned with success, and he himself become rich and powerful, he would send a crusade for the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. And it was there that, on the 22nd of December, he saw Boabdil, the elder of the two rival Kings of Granada, surrender all his rights and claims to Spain. Surely now there will be a chance for him? No; there is another interruption, this time occasioned by the royal preparations for the marriage of the Princess Isabella to the heir of Portugal. Poor Columbus, sickened and disappointed by these continual delays, irritated by a sense of the waste of his precious time, follows the Court about from one place to another, raising a smile here and a scoff there; for there is nothing so absurd as an Idea to those who do not share it.

Another summer, another winter, lost out of a life made up of a limited number of summers and winters; a few more winters and summers, thinks Christopher, and I shall be in a world

[1] See Appendix B.

where Ideas are not needed, and where there is nothing left to discover! Something had to be done. Towards the close of 1490 there was only one thing spoken of at Court—the preparations for the siege of Granada, which did not interest Columbus at all. The camp of King Ferdinand was situated at Santa Fé, a few miles to the westward of Granada, and Columbus came here late in the year, determined to get a final answer one way or the other to his question. He made his application, and the busy monarchs once more adopted their usual polite tactics. They referred the matter to the Committee of 1486, which now, after five years, gave its decision—unfavourable. The monarchs, true to their somewhat hedging methods when there was anything to be gained by hedging, informed Columbus that at present they were too much occupied with the war to grant his requests; but that, when the preoccupations and expenses of the campaign were a thing of the past, they might again turn their attention to his very interesting suggestion.

It was at this point that the patience of Columbus broke down. Too many promises had been made to him, and hope had been held out to him too often for him to believe any more in it. Spain, he decided, was useless; he would try France; at least he would be no worse off there. But he had first of all to settle his affairs as well as possible. Diego, now a growing boy nearly eleven years old, had been staying with the good monks at La Rabida; Christopher must go and see him, and perhaps leave him at his aunt's at Huelva before going away. He set out with a heavy heart, but with purpose and determination unimpaired.

CHAPTER IX

OUR LADY OF LA RABIDA

IT is a long road from Santa Fé to Huelva, a long journey to make on foot; and the burden of a sad heart would not make it very much shorter. Every step that Christopher took carried him farther away from the glittering scene where his hopes had once been so bright, and were now fallen to the dust; and every step brought him nearer that unknown destiny as to which he was in great darkness of mind, and certain only that there was some small next thing constantly to be done: the putting down of one foot after another, the request for food and lodging at the end of each short day's march, the setting out again in the morning. That walk from Santa Fé, so real and painful and wearisome and long a thing to Christopher, is utterly blank and obliterated for us. What he thought and felt and suffered are things quite dead; what he did—namely, to go and do the immediate thing that it seemed possible and right for him to do—is a living fact to-day, and brought him, as all brave and honest doing will, a little nearer to his destiny, and to the truthful realisation of what was in him.

Whatever has been his experience at Court, he finds a warm welcome at the humble monastery; they are glad to see him again; and Christopher finds in the friendly curiosity of the monks abundant encouragement to talk. Before very long he is in full swing with his oft-told story. The Prior is delighted with it; he has not heard anything so interesting for a long time. Moreover, he has not always been in a convent; he was not so long ago confessor to Queen Isabella herself, and has much to communicate and ask concerning that lady. Columbus's proposal had never struck him as being unreasonable; Brother Marchena had always believed in it; he bethinks him now of a friend in Palos, a very learned man, Doctor Garcia Hernandez, who often comes and has a talk with him; he knows all about astronomy and cosmography; the Prior will send for him. And meanwhile Columbus must stay.

Presently Doctor Garcia Hernandez arrives, and the whole

story is gone over again. They go at it hammer and tongs, arguments and counter-arguments, reasons for and against, encouragements and objections. The result is that Doctor Garcia Hernandez, whose learning seems not yet quite to have blinded or deafened him, thinks well of the scheme; thinks so well of it that he protests it will be a thousand pities if the chance of carrying it out is lost to Spain. The worthy Prior, who has been somewhat out of it while the talk about degrees and latitudes has been going on, here strikes in again; he will use his influence. Perhaps the good man, living up here among the pine-trees and the sea winds, and involved in the monotonous round of Primes, Lauds, Nones, Vespers, has a regretful thought or two of the time when he moved in the splendid intricacy of Court life; at any rate he is not sorry to have an opportunity of recalling himself to the attention of Her Majesty, for the spiritual safety of whose soul he was once responsible; perhaps, being (in spite of his Nones and Vespers) a human soul, he is glad of an opportunity of opposing the counsels of his successor, Talavera. In a word, he will use his Influence. Then follow much drafting of letters, and laying of heads together, and clatter of monkish tongues; the upshot of which is that a letter is written in which Perez urges his daughter in the Lord in the strongest possible terms not to let slip so glorious an opportunity, not only of fame and increment to her kingdom, but of service to the Church and the kingdom of Heaven itself. He assures her that Columbus is indeed about to depart from the country, but that he (Perez) will detain him at La Rabida until he has an answer from the Queen.

A messenger to carry the letter was found in the person of Sebastian Rodriguez, a pilot of the port, who immediately set off to Santa Fé. It is not likely that Columbus, after so many rebuffs, was very hopeful; but in the meantime, here he was amid the pious surroundings in which the religious part of him delighted, and in a haven of rest after all his turmoils and trials. He could look out to sea over the flecked waters of that Atlantic whose secrets he longed to discover; or he could look down into the busy little port of Palos, and watch the ships sailing in and out across the bar of Saltes. He could let his soul, much battered and torn of late by trials and disappointments, rest for a time on the rock of religion; he could snuff the incense in the chapel to his heart's content, and mingle his rough top-gallant voice with the harsh croak of the monks in the daily cycle of prayer and praise. He could walk with Diego through the sandy roads beneath the pine-trees, or through the fields and vineyards be-

low; and above all he could talk to the company that good Perez invited to meet him—among them merchants and sailors from Palos, of whom the chief was Martin Alonso Pinzon, a wealthy landowner and navigator, whose family lived then at Palos, owning the vineyards round about, and whose descendants live there to this day. Pinzon was a listener after Columbus's own heart; he not only believed in his project, but offered to assist it with money, and even to accompany the expedition himself. Altogether a happy and peaceful time, in which hopes revived, and the inner light that, although it had now and then flickered, had never gone out, burned up again in a bright and steady flame.

At the end of a fortnight, and much sooner than had been expected, the worthy pilot returned with a letter from the Queen. Eager hands seized it and opened it; delight beamed from the eyes of the good Prior. The Queen was most cordial to him, thanked him for his intervention, was ready to listen to him and even to be convinced by him; and in the meantime commanded his immediate appearance at the Court, asking that Columbus would be so good as to wait at La Rabida until he should hear further from her. Then followed such a fussing and fuming, such a running hither and thither, and giving and taking of instructions and clatter of tongues, as even the convent of La Rabida had probably never known. Nothing will serve the good old busybody, although it is now near midnight, but that he must depart at once. He will not wait for daylight; he will not, the good honest soul! wait at all. He must be off at once; he must have this, he must have that; he will take this, he will leave that behind; or no, he will take that, and leave this behind. He must have a mule, for his old feet will not bear him fast enough; ex-confessors of Her Majesty, moreover, do not travel on foot; and after more fussing and running hither and thither a mule is borrowed from one Juan Rodriguez Cabezudo of Moguer; and with a God-speed from the group standing round the lighted doorway, the old monk sets forth into the night.

It is a strange thing to consider what unimportant flotsam sometimes floats visibly upon the stream of history, while the gravest events are sunk deep beneath its flood. We would give a king's ransom to know events that must have taken place in any one of twenty years in the life of Columbus, but there is no sign of them on the surface of the stream, nor will any fishing bring them to light. Yet here, bobbing up like a cork, comes the name of Juan Rodriguez Cabezudo of Moguer, doubtless a good

worthy soul, but, since he has been dead these four centuries and more, of no interest or importance to any human being; yet of whose life one trivial act, surviving the flood of Time which has engulfed all else that he thought important, falls here to be recorded: that he did, towards midnight of a day late in December 1491, lend a mule to Friar Juan Perez.

Of that heroic mule-journey we have no record; but it brought results enough to compensate the good Prior for all his aching bones and rheumatic joints. He was welcomed by the Queen, who had never quite lost her belief in Columbus, but who had hitherto deferred to the apathy of Ferdinand and the disapproval of her learned advisers. Now, however, the matter was reopened. She, who sometimes listened to priests with results other than good, heard this worthy priest to good purpose. The feminine friends of Columbus who remembered him at Court also spoke up for him, among them the Marquesa de Moya, with whom he had always been a favourite; and it was decided that his request should be granted and three vessels equipped for the expedition, "that he might go and make discoveries and prove true the words he had spoken." Moreover, the machinery that had been so hard to move before, turned swiftly now. Diego Prieto, one of the magistrates of Palos, was sent to Columbus at La Rabida, bearing 20,000 maravedis with which he was to buy a mule and decent clothing for himself, and repair immediately to the Court at Santa Fé.

The news of that day must have come upon Columbus like a burst of sunshine after rain. I like to think how bright must have seemed to him the broad view of land and sea, how deeply the solemn words of the last Office which he attended must have sunk into his soul, how great and glad a thing life must have been to him, and how lightly the miles must have passed beneath the feet of his mule as he jogged out on the long road to Santa Fé.

CHAPTER X

THE CONSENT OF SPAIN

ONCE more, in the last days of the year 1491, Columbus rode into the brilliant camp which he had quitted a few weeks before with so heavy a heart. Things were changed now. Instead of being a suitor, making a nuisance of himself, and forcing his affairs on the attention of unwilling officials, he was now an invited and honoured guest; much more than that, he was in the position of one who believed that he had a great service to render to the Crown, and who was at last to be permitted to render it.

Even now, at the eleventh hour, there was one more brief interruption. On the 1st of January 1492 the last of the Moorish kings sent in his surrender to King Ferdinand, whom he invited to come and take possession of the city of Granada; and on the next day the Spanish army marched into that city, where, in front of the Alhambra, King Ferdinand received the keys of the castle and the homage of the Moorish kings. The wars of eight centuries were at an end, and the Christian banner of Spain floated at last over the whole land. Victory and success were in the air, and the humble Genoese adventurer was to have his share in them. Negotiations of a practical nature were now begun; old friends—Talavera, Luis de Santangel, and the Grand Cardinal himself—were all brought into consultation; with the result that matters soon got to the documentary stage. Here, however, there was a slight hitch. It was not simply a matter of granting two or three ships. The Genoese was making a bargain, and asking an impossible price. Even the great grandees and Court officials, accustomed to the glitter and dignity of titles, rubbed their eyes with astonishment when they saw what Columbus was demanding. He who had been suing for privileges was now making conditions. And what conditions! He must be created Admiral of all the Ocean Seas and of the new lands, with equal privileges and prerogatives as those appertaining to the High Admiral of Castile, the supreme naval officer of Spain. Not content with sea dignities, he was also to be Viceroy and Governor-General in all islands or main-

lands that he might acquire; he wanted a tenth part of the profits resulting from his discoveries, in perpetuity; and he must have the permanent right of contributing an eighth part of the cost of the equipment and have an additional eighth part of the profits; and all his heirs and descendants for ever were to have the same privileges. These conditions were on such a scale as no sovereign could readily approve. Columbus's lack of pedigree, and the fact also that he was a foreigner, made them seem the more preposterous; for although he might receive kindness and even friendship from some of the grand Spaniards with whom he associated, that friendship and kindness were given condescendingly and with a smile. He was delightful when he was merely proposing as a mariner to confer additional grandeur and glory on the Crown; but when it came to demanding titles and privileges which would make him rank with the highest grandees in the land, the matter took on quite a different colour. It was nonsense; it could not be allowed; and many were the friendly hints that Columbus doubtless received at this time to relinquish his wild demands and not to overreach himself.

But to the surprise and dismay of his friends, who really wished him to have a chance of distinguishing himself, and were shocked at the impediments he was now putting in his own way, the man from Genoa stood firm. What he proposed to do, he said, was worthy of the rewards that he asked; they were due to the importance and grandeur of his scheme, and so on. Nor did he fail to point out that the bestowal of them was a matter altogether contingent on results; if there were no results, there would be no rewards; if there were results, they would be worthy of the rewards. This action of Columbus's deserves close study. He had come to a turning-point in his life. He had been asking, asking, asking, for six years; he had been put off and refused over and over again; people were beginning to laugh at him for a madman; and now, when a combination of lucky chances had brought him to the very door of success, he stood outside the threshold bargaining for a preposterous price before he would come in. It seemed like the densest stupidity. What is the explanation of it?

The only explanation of it is to be found in the character of Columbus. We must try to see him as he is in this forty-second year of his life, bargaining with notaries, bishops and treasurers; we must try to see where these forty years have brought him, and what they have made of him. Remember the little boy that played in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello, acquainted with

poverty, but with a soul in him that could rise beyond it and acquire something of the dignity of that Genoa, arrogant, splendid and devout, which surrounded him during his early years. Remember his long life of obscurity at sea, and the slow kindling of the light of faith in something beyond the familiar horizons; remember the social inequality of his marriage, his long struggle with poverty, his long familiarity with the position of one who asked and did not receive, the many rebuffs and indignities which his Ligurian pride must have received at the hands of all those Spanish dignitaries and grandees—remember all this, and then you will perhaps not wonder so much that Columbus, who was beginning to believe himself appointed by Heaven to this task of discovery, felt that he had much to pay himself back for. One must recognise him frankly for what he was, and for no conventional hero of romance; a man who would reconcile his conscience with anything, and would stop at nothing in the furtherance of what he deemed a good object; and a man at the same time who had a conscience to reconcile, and would, whenever it was necessary, laboriously and elaborately perform the act of reconciliation. When he made these huge demands in Granada he was gambling with his chances; but he was a calculating gambler, just about as cunning and crafty in the weighing of one chance against another as a gambler with a conscience can be; and he evidently realised that his own valuation of the services he proposed to render would not be without its influence on his sovereign's estimate of them. At any rate he was justified by the results, for on the 17th of April 1492, after a deal of talk and bargaining, but apparently without any yielding on Columbus's part, articles of capitulation [1] were drawn up, in which the following provisions were made:—

First, that Columbus and his heirs for ever should have the title and office of Admiral in all the islands and continents of the ocean that he or they might discover, with similar honours and prerogatives to those enjoyed by the High Admiral of Castile.

Second, that he and his heirs should be Viceroys and Governors-General over all the said lands and continents, with the right of nominating three candidates for the governing of each island or province, one of whom should be appointed by the Crown.

Third, that he and his heirs should be entitled to one-tenth of all precious stones, metals, spices, and other merchandises, however acquired, within his Admiralty, the cost of acquisition being first deducted.

[1] See Appendix C.

Fourth, that he or his lieutenants in their districts, and the High Admiral of Castile in his district, should be the sole judge in all disputes arising out of traffic between Spain and the new countries.

Fifth, that he now, and he and his heirs at all times, should have the right to contribute the eighth part of the expense of fitting out expeditions, and receive the eighth part of the profits.

In addition to these articles, there was another document drawn up on the 30th of April, which after an infinite preamble about the nature of the Holy Trinity, of the Apostle Saint James, and of the Saints of God generally in their relations to Princes, and with a splendid trailing of gorgeous Spanish names and titles across the page, confers upon our hitherto humble Christopher the right, if he should succeed in his attempt, to call himself "Don," and finally raises him to a social level with his proud Spanish friends. It is probably from this time that he adopted the Spanish form of his name, Christoval Colon; but in this narrative I shall retain the more universal form, in which it has become familiar to the English-speaking world.

He was now upon a Pisgah height, from which in imagination he could look forth and see his Land of Promise. We also may climb up with him, and stand beside him as he looks westward. We shall not see so clearly as he sees, for we have not his inner light; and it is probable that even he does not see the road at all, but only the goal, a single point of light shining across a gulf of darkness. But from Pisgah there is a view backward as well as forward, and we may look back for a moment on this last period of Christopher's life in Spain, inwardly to him so full of trouble and difficulty and disappointment, outwardly so brave and glittering, musical with high-sounding names and the clash of arms, gay with sun and shine and colour. The brilliant Court moving from camp to camp with its gorgeous retinues and silken pavilions and uniforms and dresses and armours; the excitement of war, the intrigues of the antechamber—these are the bright fabric of the latter years; and against it, as against a background, stand out the beautiful names of the Spanish associates of Columbus at this time—Medina Celi, Alonso de Quintanilla, Cabrero, Deza, Hernando de Talavera, Gonzales de Mendoza, Alonso de Cardenas, Perez, Luis de Santangel, and Rodriguez de Maldonado—names that now, in his hour of triumph, are like banners streaming in the wind against a summer sky.

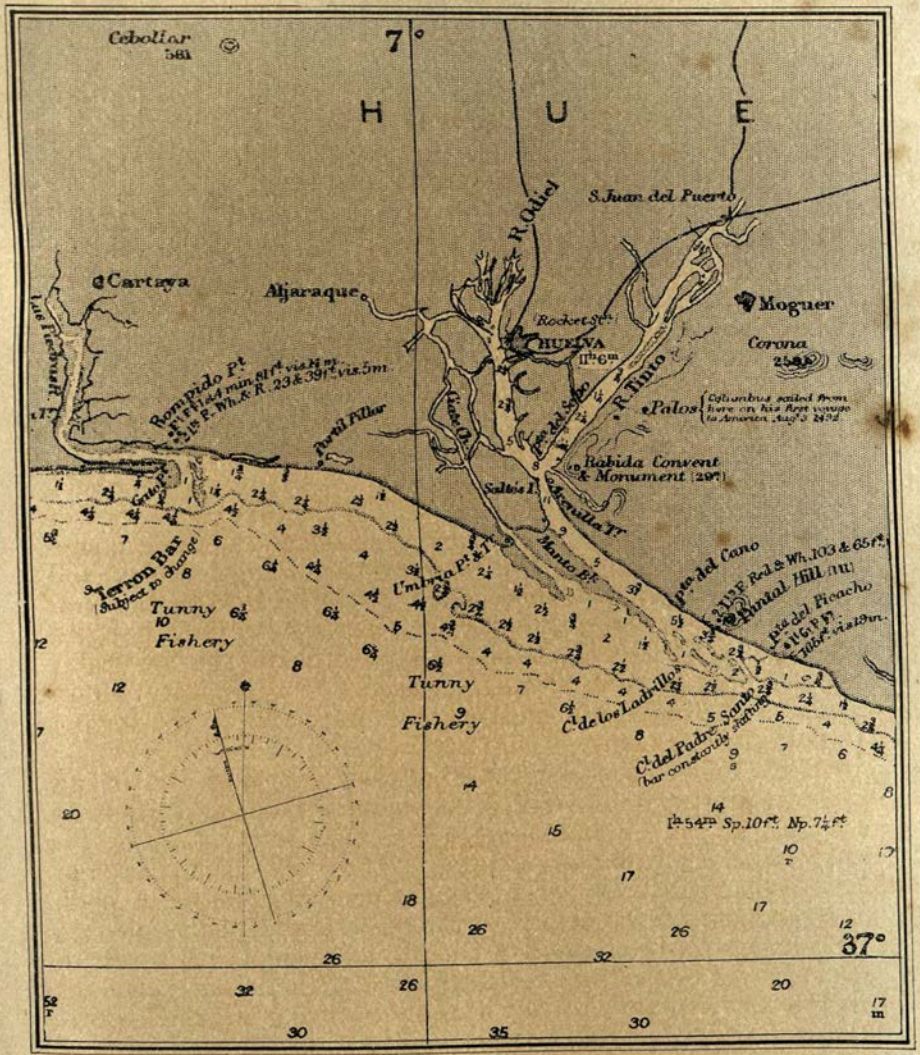
CHAPTER XI

THE PREPARATIONS AT PALOS

THE Palos that witnessed the fitting out of the ships of Columbus exists no longer. The soul is gone from it; the trade that in those days made it great and busy has floated away from it into other channels; and it has dwindled and shrunk until to-day it consists of nothing but a double street of poor white houses, such almost as you may see in any sea-coast village in Ireland. The slow salt tides of the Atlantic come flooding in over the Manto bank, across the bar of Saltes, and, dividing at the tongue of land that separates the two rivers, creep up the mud banks of the Tinto and the Odiel until they lie deep beside the wharves of Huelva and Palos; but although Huelva still has a trade, the tides bring nothing to Palos, and take nothing away with them again. From La Rabida now you can no longer see, as Columbus saw, fleets of caravels lying-to and standing off and on outside the bar waiting for the flood tide; only a few poor boats fishing for tunny in the empty sunny waters, or the smoke of a steamer standing on her course for the Guadalquiver or Cadiz.

But in those spring days of 1492 there was a great stir and bustle of preparation in Palos. As soon as the legal documents had been signed Columbus returned there and, taking up his quarters at La Rabida, set about fitting out his expedition. The reason Palos was chosen was an economical one. The port, for some misdemeanour, had lately been condemned to provide two caravels for the service of the Crown for a period of twelve months; and in the impoverished state of the royal exchequer this free service came in very usefully in fitting out the expedition of discovery. Columbus was quite satisfied, since he had such good friends at Palos; and he immediately set about choosing the ships.

This, however, did not prove to be quite such a straightforward business as might have been expected. The truth is that, whatever a few monks and physicians may have thought of it, the proposed expedition terrified the ordinary seafaring popu-



PALOS HARBOUR AND ENTRANCE

lation of Palos. It was thought to be the wildest and maddest scheme that any one had ever heard of. All that was known about the Atlantic west of the Azores was that it was a sea of darkness, inhabited by monsters and furrowed by enormous waves, and that it fell down the slope of the world so steeply that no ship having once gone down could ever climb up it again. And not only was there reluctance on the part of mariners to engage themselves for the expedition, but also a great shyness on the part of shipowners to provide ships. This reluctance proved so formidable an impediment that Columbus had to communicate with the King and Queen; with the result that on the 23rd of May the population was summoned to the church of Saint George, where the Notary Public read aloud to them the letter from the sovereigns commanding the port to furnish ships and men, and an additional order summoning the town to obey it immediately. An inducement was provided in the offer of a free pardon to all criminals and persons under sentence who chose to enlist.

Still the thing hung fire; and on 20th June a new and peremptory order was issued by the Crown authorising Columbus to impress the vessels and crews if necessary. Time was slipping away; and in his difficulty Columbus turned to Martin Alonso Pinzon, upon whose influence and power in the town he could count. There were three brothers then in this family—Martin Alonso, Vincenti Yañez, and Francisco Martin, all pilots themselves and owners of ships. These brothers had been believers in Columbus from the first; and they exerted themselves on Christopher's behalf so thoroughly that, not only did they afford him help in the obtaining of ships, men and supplies, but they all three decided to go with him.

There was one more financial question to be settled—a question that remains for us in considerable obscurity, but was in all probability settled by the aid of Martin Pinzon. The total cost of the expedition, consisting of three ships, wages of the crew, stores and provisions, was 1,167,542 maravedis, about £700 or $3500. After all these years of pleading at Court, all the disappointments and deferred hopes and sacrifices made by Columbus, the smallness of this sum cannot but strike us with amazement. Many a nobleman that Columbus must have rubbed shoulders with in his years at Court could have furnished the whole sum out of his pocket and never missed it; yet Columbus had to wait years and years before he could get it from the Crown. Still more amazing, this sum was not all provided by the Crown; 167,000 maravedis were found by Columbus, and the

Crown only contributed one million maravedis. One can only assume that Columbus's pertinacity in petitioning the King and Queen to undertake the expedition, when he could with comparative ease have got the money from some of his noble acquaintance, was due to three things—his faith and belief in his Idea, his personal ambition, and his personal greed. He believed in his Idea so thoroughly that he knew he was going to find something across the Atlantic. Continents and islands cannot for long remain in the possession of private persons; they are the currency of crowns; and he did not want to be left in the lurch if the land he hoped to discover should be seized or captured by Spain or Portugal. The result of his discoveries, he was convinced, was going to be far too large a thing to be retained and controlled by any machinery less powerful than that of a kingdom; therefore he was unwilling to accept either preliminary assistance or subsequent rewards from any but the same powerful hand. Admiralties, moreover, and Governor-Generalships and Viceroyships cannot be conferred by counts and dukes, however powerful; the very title Don could only be conferred by one power in Spain; and all the other titles and dignities that Columbus craved with all his Genoese soul were to be had from the hands of kings, and not from plutocrats. It was characteristic of him all his life never to deal with subordinates, but always to go direct to the head man; and when the whole purpose and ambition of his life was to be put to the test, it was only consistent in him, since he could not be independent, to go forth under the protection of the united Crowns of Aragon and Castile. Where or how he raised his share of the cost is not known; it is possible that his old friend the Duke of Medina Celi came to his help, but more likely that the Pinzon family, who believed enough in the expedition to risk their lives in it, lent some of the necessary money.

Ever since ships were in danger of going to sea short-handed, methods of recruiting and manning them have been very much the same; and there must have been some hot work about the harbour of Palos in the summer of 1492. The place was in a panic. It is highly probable that many of the volunteers were a ruffianly riff-raff from the prisons, to whom personal freedom meant nothing but a chance of plunder; and the recruiting office in Palos must have seen many a picturesque scoundrel coming and taking the oath and making his mark. The presence of these

adventurers, many of them entirely ignorant of the sea, would not be exactly an encouragement to the ordinary seaman. It is here very likely that the influence of the Pinzon family was usefully applied. I call it influence, since that is a polite term which covers the application of force in varying degrees; and it was an awkward thing for a Palos sailor to offend the Pinzons, who owned and controlled so much of the shipping in the port. Little by little the preparations went on. In the purchasing of provisions and stores the Pinzons were most helpful to Columbus and, it is not improbable, to themselves also. They also procured the ships; altogether, the whole history of the fitting out of the expedition shows how much Columbus owed to the help, financial and otherwise, of this family. Moreover, it is interesting to notice, since we know the names and places of residence of all the members of the expedition, that the Pinzons, who personally commanded two of the caravels, had them almost exclusively manned by sailors from Palos, while the Admiral's ship was manned by a miscellaneous crew from other places. To be sure the Admiral commanded the biggest ship, but (in his own words) it proved "a dull sailer and unfit for discovery"; while they commanded the two caravels, small and open, but much faster and handier. With or without reason, there is no doubt that from the very outset of the expedition Columbus began to show jealousy of Martin Alonso Pinzon, without whose aid he might never have sailed at all.

Three vessels were at last secured. The first, named the *Santa Maria*, was the largest, and was chosen to be the flagship of Columbus. She was of about one hundred tons burden, and would be about ninety feet in length by twenty feet beam. She was decked over, and had a high poop astern and a high forecastle in the bows. She had three masts, two of them square-rigged, with a latine sail on the mizzen mast; and she carried a crew of fifty-two persons. Where and how they all stowed themselves away is a matter upon which we can only make wondering guesses; for this ship was about the size of an ordinary small coasting schooner, such as is worked about the coasts of Great Britain with a crew of six or eight men. The next largest ship was the *Pinta*, which was commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon, who took his brother Francisco with him as sailing-master. The *Pinta* was of fifty tons burden, decked only at the bow and stern, and the fastest of the three ships; she also had three masts.

The third ship was a caravel of forty tons, and called the *Niña*; she belonged to Juan Niño of Palos. She was commanded by Vincenti Pinzon, and had a complement of eighteen men. Among the crew of the flagship was one Guillermo Ires, an Irishman from Galway.[1]

Irish William, shuffling into the recruiting office in Palos, doubtless thinks that this is a strange place, and rather a wild business that he is embarked upon, among all these bloody Spaniards. He is but the first of a mighty stream that will leave the Old Country for the New World; the world destined to be good for the fortunes of many from the Old Country, but for the Old Country itself not good. Little does he know, drunken William, willing to be on hand where there is adventure brewing, and to be after going with the boys and getting his health on the salt water, what a path of hope for those who go, and of heaviness for those who stay behind, he is opening up. . . . Farewell, William; I hope you were not one of those whom they let out of gaol.

June slid into July, and still the preparations were not complete. Down on the mud banks of the Tinto, where at low water the vessels were left high and dry, and where the caulking and refitting were in hand, there was trouble with the workmen. Gomaz Rascon and Christoval Quintero, the owners of the *Pinta*, who had resented her being pressed into the service, were at the bottom of a good deal of it. Things could not be found; gear mysteriously gave way after it had been set up; the caulking was found to have been carelessly and imperfectly done; and when the caulkers were commanded to do it over again they decamped. Even the few volunteers, the picked hands upon whom Columbus was relying, gave trouble. In those days of waiting there was too much opportunity for talk in the shore-side wine-shops; some of the volunteers repented and tried to cry off their bargains; others were dissuaded by their relatives, and deserted and hid themselves. No mild measures were of any use; a reign of terror had to be established; and nothing short of the influence of the Pinzons was severe enough to hold the company together. To these vigorous measures, however, all opposition gradually yielded. By the end of July the provisions and stores were on board, the whole complement of eighty-seven persons

[1] A list of those who accompanied Columbus will be found in FERRÉ: "El descubrimiento de America," Appendix III.

collected and enlisted, and only the finishing touches left for Columbus. It is a sign of the distrust and fear evinced with regard to this expedition that no priest accompanied it—something of a sorrow to pious Christopher, who would have liked his chaplain. There were two surgeons, or barbers, and a physician; there were an overseer, a secretary, a master-at-arms; there was an interpreter to speak to the natives of the new lands in Hebrew, Greek, German, Chaldean or Arabic; and there was an assayer and silversmith to test the quality of the precious metals that they were sure to find. Up at La Rabida, with the assistance of Friar Marchena the old Prior, Columbus made his final preparations. Ferdinand was to stay at Cordova with Beatriz, and to go to school there; while Diego was already embarked upon his life's voyage, having been appointed a page to the Queen's son, Prince Juan, and handed over to the care of some of the Court ladies. The course to be sailed was talked over and over again; the bearings and notes of the pilot at Porto Santo consulted and discussed; and a chart was made by Columbus himself, and copied with his own hands for use on the three ships.

On the 2nd of August everything was ready; the ships moored out in the stream, the last stragglers of the crew on board, the last sack of flour and barrel of beef stowed away. Columbus confessed himself to the Prior of La Rabida—a solemn moment for him in the little chapel up on the pine-clad hill. His last evening ashore would certainly be spent at the monastery, and his last counsels taken with Perez and Doctor Hernandez. We can hardly realise the feelings of Christopher on the eve of his departure from the land where all his roots were, to a land of mere faith and conjecture. Even to-day, when the ocean is furrowed by crowded highways, and the earth is girdled with speaking wires, and distances are so divided and reduced that the traveller need never be very long out of touch with his home, few people can set out on a long voyage without some emotional disturbance, however slight it may be; and to Columbus on this night the little town upon which he looked down from the monastery, which had been the scene of so many delays and difficulties and vexations, must have seemed suddenly dear and familiar as he realised that after to-morrow its busy and well-known scenes might be for ever things of the past to him. Behind him, living or dead, lay all he humanly loved and

cared for; before him lay a voyage full of certain difficulties and dangers; dangers from the ships, dangers from the crews, dangers from the weather, dangers from the unknown path itself; and beyond them, a twinkling star on the horizon of his hopes, lay the land of his belief. That he meant to arrive there and to get back again was beyond all doubt his firm intention; and in the simple grandeur of that determination the weaknesses of character that were grouped about it seem unimportant. In this starlit hour among the pine woods his life came to its meridian; everything that was him was at its best and greatest there. Beneath him, on the talking tide of the river, lay the ships and equipment that represented years of steady effort and persistence; before him lay the pathless ocean which he meant to cross by the inner light of his faith. What he had suffered, he had suffered by himself; what he had won, he had won by himself; what he was to finish, he would finish by himself.

But the time for meditation grows short. Lights are moving about in the town beneath; there is an unwonted midnight stir and bustle; the whole population is up and about, running hither and thither with lamps and torches through the starlit night. The tide is flowing; it will be high-water before dawn; and with the first of the ebb the little fleet is to set sail. The stream of hurrying sailors and townspeople sets towards the church of Saint George, where Mass is to be said and the Sacrament administered to the voyagers. The calls and shouts die away; the bell stops ringing; and the low muttering voice of the priest is heard beginning the Office. The light of the candles shines upon the gaudy roof, and over the altar upon the wooden image of Saint George vanquishing the dragon, upon which the eyes of Christopher rested during some part of the service, and where to-day your eyes may rest also if you make that pilgrimage. The moment approaches; the bread and the wine are consecrated; there is a shuffling of knees and feet; and then a pause. The clear notes of the bell ring out upon the warm dusky silence—once, twice, thrice; the living God and the cold presence of dawn enter the church together. Every head is bowed; and for once at least every heart of that company beats in unison with the rest. And then the Office goes on, and the dark-skinned congregation streams up to the sanctuary and receives the Communion, while the blue light of dawn increases and the candles pale before the coming day. And then out again to the boats with

shoutings and farewells, for the tide has now turned ; hoisting of sails and tripping of anchors and breaking out of gorgeous ensigns ; and the ships are moving ! The *Maria* leads, with the sign of the Redemption painted on her mainsail and the standard of Castile flying at her mizzen ; and there is cheering from ships and from shore, and a faint sound of bells from the town of Huelva.

Thus, the sea being calm, and a fresh breeze blowing off the land, did Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos at sunrise on Friday the 3rd of August 1492.

CHAPTER XII

EVENTS OF THE FIRST VOYAGE

"IN NOMINE D.N. JESU CHRISTI. — Friday, August 3, 1492, at eight o'clock we started from the bar of Saltes. We went with a strong sea breeze sixty miles, which are fifteen leagues,[1] towards the south, until sunset: afterwards to the south-west and to the south, quarter south-west, which was the way to the Canaries."

With these rousing words the Journal[2] of Columbus's voyage begins; and they sound a salt and mighty chord which contains the true diapason of the symphony of his voyages. There could not have been a more fortunate beginning, with clear weather and a calm sea, and the wind in exactly the right quarter. On Saturday and Sunday the same conditions held, so there was time and opportunity for the three very miscellaneous ships' companies to shake down into something like order, and for all the elaborate discipline of sea life to be arranged and established; and we may employ the interval by noting what aids to navigation Columbus had at his disposal.[3]

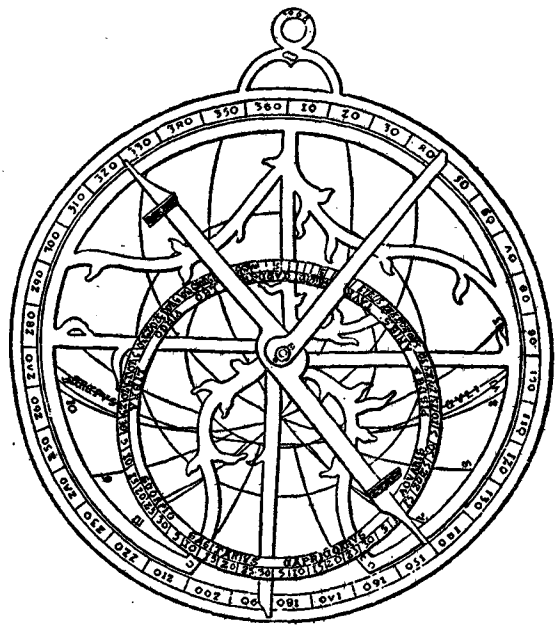
The chief instrument was the astrolabe, which was an improvement on the primitive quadrant then in use for taking

[1] Columbus reckoned in Italian miles, of which four=one league.

[2] The account of Columbus's first voyage is taken from a Journal written by himself, but which in its original form does not exist. Las Casas had it in his possession, but as he regarded it (no doubt with justice) as too voluminous and discursive to be interesting, he made an abridged edition, in which the exact words of Columbus were sometimes quoted, but which for the most part is condensed into a narrative in the third person. This abridged Journal, consisting of seventy-six closely written folios, was first published by Navarrette in 1825. When Las Casas wrote his "Historie," however, he appears here and there to have restored sections of the original Journal into the abridged one; and many of these restorations are of importance. If the whole account of his voyage written by Columbus himself were available in its exact form I would print it here; but as it is not, I think it better to continue my narrative, simply using the Journal of Las Casas as a document.

[3] See Note by the Earl of Dunraven.

the altitude of the sun. The astrolabe, it will be remembered, had been greatly improved by Martin Behaim and the Portuguese Commission in 1490; and it was this instrument, a simplification of the astrolabe used in astronomy ashore, that Columbus chiefly used in getting his solar altitudes. As will be seen from the illustration, its broad principle was that of a metal circle with a graduated circumference and two arms



pivoted in the centre. It was made as heavy as possible; and in using it the observer sat on deck with his back against the mainmast and with his left hand held up the instrument by the ring at the top. The long arm was moved round until the two sights fixed upon it were on with the sun. The point where the other arm then cut the circle gave the altitude. In conjunction with this instrument were used the tables of solar declination compiled by Regiomontanus, and covering the sun's declination between the years 1475 and 1566.

The compass in Columbus's day existed, so far as all essen-

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tials are concerned, as it exists to-day. Although it lacked the refinements introduced by Lord Kelvin, it was swung in double cradles, and had the thirty-two points painted upon a card. The discovery of the compass, and even of the lodestone, are things wrapt in obscurity; but the lodestone had been known since at least the eleventh century, and the compass certainly since the thirteenth. With the compass were used the sea charts, which were simply maps on a rather larger and more exact scale than the land maps of the period. There were no soundings or currents marked on the old charts, which were drawn on a plane projection; and they can have been of little practical use to navigators except in the case of coasts which were elaborately charted on a large scale. The chart of Columbus, in so far as it was concerned with the ocean westward of the Azores, can of course have contained nothing except the conjectured islands or lands which he hoped to find; possibly the land seen by the shipwrecked pilot may have been marked on it, and his failure to find that land may have been the reason why, as we shall see, he changed his course to the southward on the 7th of October. It must be remembered that Columbus's conception of the world was that of the Portuguese mappemonde of 1490, a sketch of which is here reproduced. This conception of the world excluded the Pacific Ocean and the continent of North and South America, and made it reasonable to suppose that any one who sailed westward long enough from Spain would ultimately reach Cathay and the Indies. Behaim's globe, which was completed in the year 1492, represented the farthest point that geographical knowledge had reached previous to the discoveries of Columbus, and on it is shown the island of Cipango, or Japan.

By far the most important element in the navigation of Columbus, in so far as estimating his position was concerned, was what is known as "dead-reckoning"—that is to say, the computation of the distance travelled by the ship through the water. At present this distance is measured by a patent log, which in its commonest form is a propeller-shaped instrument trailed through the water at the end of a long wire or cord the inboard end of which is attached to a registering clock. On being dragged through the water the propeller spins round and the twisting action is communicated by the cord to the clock-work machinery which counts the miles. In the case of powerful

steamers and in ordinary weather dead-reckoning is very accurately calculated by the number of revolutions of the propellers recorded in the engine-room; and a device not unlike

this was known to the Romans in the time of the Republic. They attached small wheels about four feet in diameter to the sides of their ships; the passage of the water turned the wheels,

and a very simple gearing was arranged which threw a pebble into a tallypot at each revolution. This device, however, seems to have been abandoned or forgotten in Columbus's day, when there was no more exact method of estimating dead-reckoning than the primitive one of spitting over the side in calm weather, or at other times throwing some object into the water and estimating the rate of progress by its speed in passing the ship's side. The hour-glass, which was used to get the multiple for long distances, was of course the only portable time-measurer available for Columbus. These, with a rough knowledge of astronomy, and the taking of the altitude of the polar star, were the only known means for ascertaining the position of his ship at sea.

The first mishap occurred on Monday, August 6, when the rudder of the *Pinta* was carried away. The *Pinta*, it will be remembered, was commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon, and was owned by Gomaz Rascon and Christoval Quintero, who had been at the bottom of some of the troubles ashore; and it was thought highly probable that these two rascals had something to do with the mishap, which they had engineered in the hope that their vessel would be left behind at the Canaries. Martin Alonso, however, proved a man of resource, and rigged up a sort of steering gear with ropes. There was a choppy sea, and Columbus could not bring his own vessel near enough to render any assistance, though he doubtless bawled his directions to Pinzon, and looked with a troubled eye on the commotion going on on board the *Pinta*. On the next day the jury-rigged rudder was carried away again, and was again repaired; but it was decided to try and make the island of Lanzarote in the Canaries, and to get another caravel to replace the *Pinta*. All through the next day the *Santa Maria* and the *Niña* had to shorten sail in order not to leave the damaged *Pinta* behind; the three captains had a discussion and difference of opinion as to where they were; but Columbus, who was a genius at dead-reckoning, proved to be right in his surmise, and they came in sight of the Canaries on Thursday morning, August 9.

Columbus left Pinzon on the Grand Canary, with orders to try to obtain a caravel there, while he sailed on to Gomera, which he reached on Sunday night, with a similar purpose. As he was unsuccessful he sent a message by a boat that was going back to tell Pinzon to beach the *Pinta* and repair her rudder;

and having spent more days in fruitless search for a vessel, he started back to join Pinzon on August 23. During the night he passed the Peak of Teneriffe, which was then in eruption. The repairs to the *Pinta* took longer than had been expected; it was found necessary to make an entirely new rudder for her; and advantage was taken of the delay to make some alterations in the rig of the *Niña*, which was changed from a latine rig to a square rig, so that she might be better able to keep up with the others. September had come before these two jobs were completed; and on the 2nd of September the three ships sailed for Gomera, the most westerly of the islands, where they anchored in the north-east bay. The Admiral was in a great hurry to get away from the islands and from the track of merchant ships, for he had none too much confidence in the integrity of his crews, which were already murmuring and finding every mishap a warning sign from God. He therefore only stayed long enough at Gomera to take in wood and water and provisions, and set sail from that island on the 6th of September.

The wind fell lighter and lighter, and on Friday the little fleet lay becalmed within sight of Ferro. But on Saturday evening north-east airs sprang up again, and they were able to make nine leagues of westing. On Sunday they had lost sight of land; and at thus finding their ships three lonely specks in the waste of ocean the crew lost heart and began to lament. There was something like a panic, many of the sailors bursting into tears and imploring Columbus to take them home again. To us it may seem a rather childish exhibition; but it must be remembered that these sailors were unwillingly embarked upon a voyage which they believed would only lead to death and disaster. The bravest of us to-day, if he found himself press-ganged on board a balloon and embarked upon a journey, the object of which was to land upon Mars or the moon, might find it difficult to preserve his composure on losing sight of the earth; and the parallel is not too extreme to indicate the light in which their present enterprise must have appeared to many of the Admiral's crew.

Columbus gave orders to the captains of the other two ships that, in case of separation, they were to sail westward for 700 leagues—that being the distance at which he evidently expected to find land—and there to lie-to from midnight until morning. On this day also, seeing the temper of the sailors, he began one of the crafty stratagems upon which he prided himself, and which were often undoubtedly of great use to him; he kept two

reckonings, one a true one, which he entered in his log, and one a false one, by means of which the distance run was made out to be less than what it actually was, so that in case he could not make land as soon as he hoped the crew would not be unduly discouraged. In other words, he wished to have a margin at the other end, for he did not want a mutiny when he was perhaps within a few leagues of his destination. On this day he notes that the raw and inexperienced seamen were giving trouble in other ways, and steering very badly, continually letting the ship's head fall off to the north; and many must have been the angry remonstrances from the captain to the man at the wheel. Altogether rather a trying day for Christopher, who surely has about as much on his hands as ever mortal had; but he knows how to handle ships and how to handle sailors, and so long as this ten-knot breeze lasts, he can walk the high poop of the *Santa Maria* with serenity, and snap his fingers at the dirty rabble below.

On Monday they made sixty leagues, the Admiral duly announcing forty-eight; on Tuesday twenty leagues, published as sixteen; and on this day they saw a large piece of a mast which had evidently belonged to a ship of at least 120 tons burden. This was not an altogether cheerful sight for the eighteen souls on board the little *Niña*, who wondered ruefully what was going to happen to them of forty tons when ships three times their size had evidently been unable to live in this abominable sea. On Thursday, September 13, when Columbus took his observations, he made a great scientific discovery, although he did not know it at the time. He noticed that the needle of the compass was declining to the west of north instead of having a slight declination to the east of north, as all mariners knew it to have. In other words, he had passed the line of true north and of no variation, and must therefore have been in latitude 28° N. and longitude 29° 37′ W. of Greenwich. With his usual secrecy he said nothing about it; perhaps he was waiting to see if the pilots on the other ships had noticed it, but apparently they were not so exact in their observations as he was. On the next day, Friday, the wind falling a little lighter, they made only twenty leagues. "Here the persons on the caravel *Niña* said they had seen a jay and a ringtail, and these birds never come more than twenty-five leagues from land at most." —Unhappy persons on the *Niña*! Nineteen souls, including the

captain, afloat in a very small boat, and arguing God knows what from the fact that a jay and a ringtail never went more than twenty-five leagues from land!—The next day also was not without its incident; for on Saturday evening they saw a meteor, or "marvellous branch of fire," falling from the serene violet of the sky into the sea.

They were now well within the influence of the trade-wind, which in these months blows steadily from the east, and maintains an exquisite and balmy climate. Even the Admiral, never very communicative about his sensations, deigns to mention them here, and is reported to have said that "it was a great pleasure to enjoy the morning; that nothing was lacking except to hear the nightingales, and that the weather was like April in Andalusia." On this day they saw some green grasses, which the Admiral considered must have floated off from some island; "not the continent," says the Admiral, whose theories are not to be disturbed by a piece of grass, "because I make the continental land farther onward." The crew, ready to take the most depressing and pessimistic view of everything, considered that the lumps of grass belonged to rocks or submerged lands, and murmured disparaging things about the Admiral. As a matter of fact these grasses were masses of seaweed detached from the Sargasso Sea, which they were soon to enter.

On Monday, September 17, four days after Columbus had noted it, the other pilots noted the declination of the needle, which they had found on taking the position of the North star. They did not like it; and Columbus, whose knowledge of astronomy came to his aid, ordered them to take the position of the North star at dawn again, which they did, and found that the needles were true. He evidently thought it useless to communicate to them his scientific speculations, so he explained to them that it was the North star which was moving in its circle, and not the compass. One is compelled to admit that in these little matters of deceit the Admiral always shone. To-day, among the seaweed on the ship's side, he picked up a little crayfish, which he kept for several days, presumably in a basin in his cabin; and perhaps afterwards ate.

So for several days this calm and serene progress westward was maintained. The trade-wind blew steady and true, balmy and warm also; the sky was cloudless, except at morning and evening dusk; and there were for scenery those dazzling ex-

panses of sea and sky, and those gorgeous hues of dawn and sunset, which are only to be found in the happy latitudes. The things that happened to them, the bits of seaweed and fishes that they saw in the water, the birds that flew around them, were observed with a wondering attention and wistful yearning after their meaning such as is known only to children and to sailors adventuring on uncharted seas. The breezes were milder even than those of the Canaries, and the waters always less salt; and the men, forgetting their fears of the monsters of the Sea of Darkness, would bathe alongside in the limpid blue. The little crayfish was a "sure indication of land"; a tunny fish, killed by the company on the *Niña*, was taken to be an indication from the west, "where I hope in that exalted God, in whose hands are all victories, that land will very soon appear"; they saw another ringtail, "which is not accustomed to sleep on the sea"; two pelicans came to the ship, "which was an indication that land was near"; a large dark cloud appeared to the north, "which is a sign that land is near"; they saw one day a great deal of grass, "although the previous day they had not seen any"; they took a bird with their hands which was like a jay; "it was a river bird and not a sea bird"; they saw a whale, "which is an indication that they are near land, because they always remain near it"; afterwards a pelican came from the west-north-west and went to the south-east, "which was an indication that it left land to the west-north-west, because these birds sleep on land and in the morning they come to the sea in search of food, and do not go twenty leagues from land." And "at dawn two or three small land birds came singing to the ships; and afterwards disappeared before sunrise."

Such beautiful signs, interpreted by the light of their wishes, were the events of this part of the voyage. In the meantime, they have their little differences. Martin Alonso Pinzon, on Tuesday, September 18, speaks from the *Pinta* to the *Santa Maria*, and says that he will not wait for the others, but will go and make the land, since it is so near; but apparently he does not get very far out of the way, the wind which wafts him wafting also the *Santa Maria* and the *Niña*.

On the 19th September there was a comparison of dead-reckonings. The *Niña's* pilot made it 440 leagues from the Canaries, the *Pinta's* 420 leagues, and the Admiral's pilot, doubtless instructed by the Admiral, made it 400. On Sunday

the 23rd they were getting into the seaweed and finding crayfish again; and there being no reasonable cause for complaint, a scare was got up among the crew on an exceedingly ingenious point. The wind having blown steadily from the east for a matter of three weeks, they said that it would never blow in any other direction, and that they would never be able to get back to Spain; but later in the afternoon the sea got up from the westward, as though in answer to their fears, and as if to prove that somewhere or other ahead of them there was a west wind blowing; and the Admiral remarks that "the high sea was very necessary to me, as it came to pass once before in the time when the Jews went out of Egypt with Moses, who took them from captivity." And indeed there was something of Moses in this man who thus led his little rabble from a Spanish seaport out across the salt wilderness of the ocean, and interpreted the signs for them, and stood between them and the powers of vengeance and terror that were set about their uncharted path.

But it appears that Columbus had gone just a little too far in interpreting everything they saw as a sign that they were approaching land; for his miserable crew, instead of being comforted by this fact, now took the opportunity to be angry because the signs were not fulfilled. The more the signs pointed to their nearness to land, the more they began to murmur and complain because they did not see it. They began to form together in little groups—always an ominous sign at sea—and even at night those who were not on deck got together in murmuring companies. Some of the things that they said, indeed, were not very far from the truth; among others, that it was "a great madness on their part to venture their lives in following out the madness of a foreigner who to make himself a great lord had risked his life, and now saw himself and all of them in great exigency and was deceiving so many people." They remembered that his proposition, or "dream" as they not inaptly call it, had been contradicted by many great and lettered men; and then followed some very ominous words indeed. They held[1] that "it was enough to excuse them from whatever might be done in the matter that they had arrived where man had never dared to navigate, and that they were not obliged to go to the end of the world, especially as, if they delayed more, they would not be able to have provisions to return." In short, the best thing would be to throw him into the

[1] The substance of these murmurings is not in the abridged Journal, but is given by Las Casas under the date of September 24.

sea some night, and make a story that he had fallen into the water while taking the position of a star with his astrolabe; and no one would ask any questions, as he was a foreigner. They carried this talk to the Pinzons, who listened to them, according to Columbus, who showed his jealousy of them in his Journal. "Of these Pinzons Christopher Columbus complains greatly, and of the trouble they had given him."

There is only one method of keeping down mutiny at sea, and of preserving discipline. It is hard enough where the mutineers are all on one ship and the commander's officers are loyal to him; but when they are distributed over three ships, the captains of two of which are deemed to be untrustworthy, the problem becomes grave indeed. We have no details of how Columbus quieted them; but it is probable that his strong personality awed them, while his clever and plausible words persuaded them. He was the best sailor of them all, and they knew it; and in a matter of this kind the best and strongest man always wins, and can only in such a pass maintain his authority by proving his absolute right to it. So he talked and persuaded and bullied and encouraged and cheered them; "laughing with them," as Las Casas says, "while he was weeping at heart."

Probably as a result of this unpleasantness there was on the following day, Tuesday, September 25, a consultation between Martin Alonso Pinzon and the Admiral. The *Santa Maria* closed up with the *Pinta*, and a chart was passed over on a cord. There were islands marked on the chart in this region, possibly the islands reported by the shipwrecked pilot, possibly the island of Antilia; and Pinzon said he thought that they were somewhere in the region of them, and the Admiral said that he thought so too. There was a deal of talk and pricking of positions on charts; and then, just as the sun was setting, Martin Alonso, standing on the stern of the *Pinta*, raised a shout and said that he saw land; asking (business-like Martin) at the same time for the reward which had been promised to the first one who should see land. They all saw it, a low cloud to the south-west, apparently about twenty-five leagues distant; and the devout Christopher, in the emotion of the moment, fell on his knees in gratitude to God. The crimson sunset of that evening saw the rigging of the three ships black with eager figures, and on the quiet air were borne the sounds of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, which was repeated by each ship's company.

The course was altered to the south-west, and they sailed in that direction seventeen leagues during the night; but in the morning there was no land to be seen. The sunset clouds that had so often deceived the dwellers in the Canaries and the Azores, and that in some form or other hover at times upon all eagerly scanned horizons, had also deceived Columbus and every one of his people; but they created a diversion which was of help to the Admiral in getting things quiet again, for which in his devout soul he thanked the merciful providence of God.

And so they sailed on again on a westward course. They were still in the Sargasso Sea, and could watch the beautiful golden floating mass of the gulf-weed, covered with berries and showing, a little way under the clear water, bright green leaves. The sea was as smooth as the river in Seville; there were frigate pelicans flying about, and John Dorys in the water; several gulls were seen; and a youth on board the *Niña* killed a pelican with a stone. On Monday, October 1, there was a heavy shower of rain; and Juan de la Cosa, Columbus's pilot, came up to him with the doleful information that they had run 578 leagues from the island of Ferro. According to Christopher's doctored reckoning the distance published was 584 leagues; but his true reckoning, about which he said nothing to a soul, showed that they had gone 707 leagues. The breeze still kept steady and the sea calm; and day after day, with the temper of the crews getting uglier and uglier, the three little vessels forged westward through the blue, weed-strewn waters, their tracks lying undisturbed far behind them. On Saturday, October 6, the Admiral was signalled by Alonso Pinzon, who wanted to change the course to the south-west. It appears that, having failed to find the islands of the shipwrecked pilot, they were now making for the island of Cipango, and that this request of Pinzon had something to do with some theory of his that they had better turn to the south to reach that island; while Columbus's idea now evidently was to push straight on to the mainland of Cathay. Columbus had his way; but the grumbling and murmuring increased among the crew.

On the next day, Sunday, and perhaps just in time to avert another outbreak, there was heard the sound of a gun, and the watchers on the *Santa Maria* and the *Pinta* saw a puff of smoke coming from the *Niña*, which was sailing ahead, and hoisting a flag on her masthead. This was the signal agreed upon for the discovery of land, and it seemed as though their search was at last at an end. But it was a mistake. In the afternoon the land

that the people of the *Niña* thought they had seen had disappeared, and the horizon was empty except for a great flight of birds that was seen passing from the north to the south-west. The Admiral, remembering how often birds had guided the Portuguese in the islands in their possessions, argued that the birds were either going to sleep on land or were perhaps flying from winter, which he assumed to be approaching in the land from whence they came. He therefore altered his course from west to west-south-west, Pinzon's original plan. This course was set an hour before sunset and continued until next day. "The sea was like the river of Seville," says the Admiral; "the breezes as soft as at Seville in April, and very fragrant." More birds were to be seen, and there were many signs of land; but the crew, so often disappointed in their hopeful interpretations of the phenomena surrounding them, kept on murmuring and complaining. On Tuesday, October 9, the wind chopped round a little and the course was altered, first to south-west and then at evening to a point north of west; and the Journal records that "all night they heard birds passing." The next day Columbus resumed the west-south-westerly course and made a run of fifty-nine leagues; but the mariners broke out afresh in their discontent, and declined to go any farther. They complained of the long voyage, and expressed their views strongly to the commander. But they had to deal with a man who was determined to begin with, and who saw in the many signs of land that they had met with only an additional inducement to go on. He told them firmly that with or without their consent he intended to go on until he had found the land he had come to seek.

The next day, Thursday, October 11, was destined to be for ever memorable in the history of the world. It began ordinarily enough, with a west-south-west wind blowing fresh, and on a sea rather rougher than they had had lately. The people on the *Santa Maria* saw some petrels and a green branch in the water; the *Pinta* saw a reed and two small sticks carved with iron, and one or two other pieces of reeds and grasses that had been grown on shore, as well as a small board. Most wonderful of all, the people of the *Niña* saw "a little branch full of dog roses"; and it would be hard to estimate the sweet significance of this fragment of a wild plant from land to the senses of men who had been so long upon a sea from which they had thought

never to land alive. The day drew to its close; and after nightfall, according to their custom, the crews of the ships repeated the *Salve Regina*. Afterwards the Admiral addressed the people and sailors of his ship, "very merry and pleasant," reminding them of the favours God had shown them with regard to the weather, and begging them, as they hoped to see land very soon, within an hour or so, to keep an extra good look-out that night from the forecastle; and Columbus added to the reward of an annuity of 10,000 maravedis, offered by the Queen to whoever should sight land first, a gift on his own account of a silk doublet.

The moon was in its third quarter, and did not rise until eleven o'clock. The first part of the night was dark, and there was only a faint starlight into which the anxious eyes of the look-out men peered from the forecastles of the three ships. At ten o'clock Columbus was walking on the poop of his vessel, when he suddenly saw a light right ahead. The light seemed to rise and fall as though it were a candle or a lantern held in some one's hand and waved up and down. The Admiral called Pedro Gutierrez to him and asked him whether he saw anything; and he also saw the light. Then he sent for Rodrigo Sanchez and asked him if he saw the light; but he did not, perhaps because a spar or line of rigging was in the way. But the others were left in no doubt, for the light was seen once or twice more, and to the eyes of the anxious little group standing on the high stern deck of the *Santa Maria* it appeared unmistakably. The *Niña* was not close at hand, and the *Pinta* had gone on in front hoping to make good her mistake; but there was no doubt on board the *Santa Maria* that the light which they had seen was a light like a candle or a torch waved slowly up and down. They lost the light again; and as the hours in that night stole away and the moon rose slowly in the sky the seamen on the *Santa Maria* must have almost held their breath.

At about two o'clock in the morning the sound of a gun was heard from the *Pinta*, who could be seen hoisting her flags; Rodrigo de Triana, the look-out on board of her, having reported land in sight; and there sure enough in the dim light lay the low shores of an island a few miles ahead of them.

Immediately all sails were lowered, except a small trysail which enabled the ships to lie-to and stand slowly off and on, waiting for the daylight. I suppose there was never a longer night than that; but dawn came at last, flooding the sky with lemon and saffron and scarlet and orange, until at last the pure

gold of the sun glittered on the water. And when it rose it showed the sea-weary mariners an island lying in the blue sea ahead of them: the island of Guanahani; San Salvador, as it was christened by Columbus; or, to give it its unlovely modern name, Watling's Island.

CHAPTER XIII

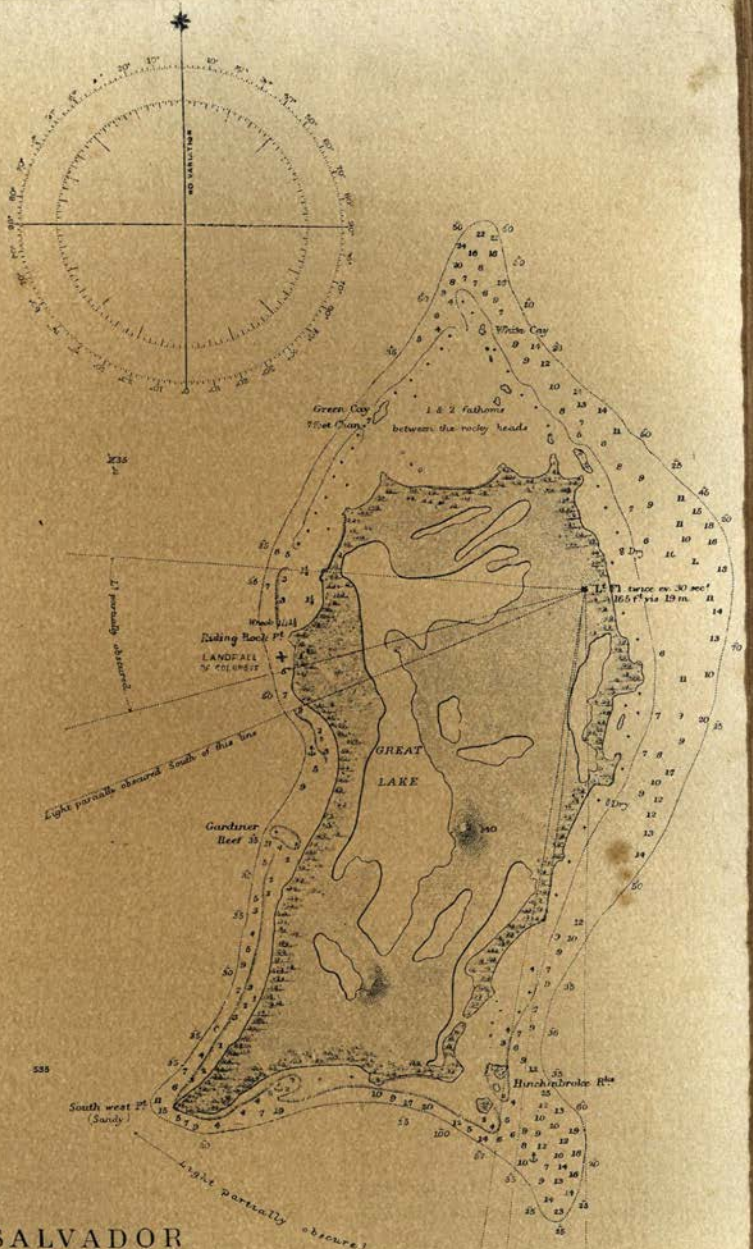
LANDFALL

DURING the night the ships had drifted a little with the current, and before the north-east wind. When the look-out man on the *Pinta* first reported land in sight it was probably the north-east corner of the island, where the land rises to a height of 120 feet, that he saw. The actual anchorage of Columbus was most likely to the westward of the island; for there was a strong north-easterly breeze, and as the whole of the eastern coast is fringed by a barrier reef, he would not risk his ships on a lee shore. Finding himself off the north end of the island at sunrise, the most natural thing for him to do, on making sail again, would be to stand southward along the west side of the island looking for an anchorage. The first few miles of the shore have rocky, exposed points, and the bank where there is shoal water only extends half-a-mile from the shore. Immediately beyond that the bottom shelves rapidly down to a depth of 2000 fathoms, so that if Columbus was sounding as he came south he would find no bottom there. Below what are called the Ridings Rocks, however, the land sweeps to the south and east in a long sheltered bay, and to the south of these rocks there is good anchorage and firm holding-ground in about eight fathoms of water.

We may picture them, therefore, approaching this land in the bright sunshine of the early morning, their ears, that had so long heard nothing but the slat of canvas and the rush and bubble of water under the prows, filled at last with the great resounding roar of the breakers on the coral reef; their eyes, that had so long looked upon blue emptiness and the star-spangled violet arch of night, feasting upon the living green of the foliage ashore; and the north-east breeze carrying to their eager nostrils the perfumes of land. Amid an excitement and joyful anticipation that it is exhilarating even to think about the cables were got up and served and coiled on deck, and the anchors, which some of them had thought would never grip the bottom again, unstopped and cleared. The leadsman of

the *Santa Maria*, who has been finding no bottom with his forty-fathom line, suddenly gets a sounding; the water shoals rapidly until the nine-fathom mark is unwetted, and the lead comes up with its bottom covered with brown ooze. Sail is shortened; one after another the great ungainly sheets of canvas are clewed up or lowered down on deck; one after another the three helms are starboarded, and the three ships brought up to the wind. Then with three mighty splashes that send the sea birds whirling and screaming above the rocks the anchors go down; and the Admiral stands on his high poop-deck, and looks long and searchingly at the fragment of earth, rock-rimmed, surf-ringed, and tree-crowned, of which he is Viceroy and Governor-General.

Watling's Island, as it is now called, or San Salvador, as Columbus named it, or Guanahani, as it was known to the aborigines, is situated in latitude 24° 6′ N., and longitude 74° 26′ W., and is an irregularly shaped white sandstone islet in about the middle of the great Bahama Bank. The space occupied by the whole group is shaped like an irregular triangle extending from the Navidad Bank in the Caribbean Sea at the south-east corner, to Bahama Island in Florida Strait on the north, about 200 miles. The south side trends west by north for 600 miles, and the north side north-west by north 720 miles. Most of the islands and small rocks in this group, called Keys or Cays, are very low, and rise only a few feet above the sea; the highest is about 400 feet high. They are generally situated on the edge of coral and sandbanks, some of which are of a very dangerous character. They are thinly wooded, except in the case of one or two of the larger islands which contain timber of moderate dimensions. The climate of the Bahamas is mild and temperate, with refreshing sea breezes in the hottest months; and there is a mean temperature of 75° from November to April. Watling's Island is about twelve miles in length by six in breadth, with rocky shores slightly indented. The greater part of its area is occupied by salt-water lagoons, separated from one another by small wooded hills from 100 to 140 feet high. There is plenty of grass; indeed the island is now considered to be the most fertile in the Bahamas, and raises an excellent breed of cattle and sheep. In common with the other islands of the group it was originally settled by the Spaniards, and afterwards by the British, who were driven from the



SAN SALVADOR
OR
WATLING ISLAND

(The Landfall of Columbus 1492)

Light - Lat. 24°5'.30" N. - Long. 74°26'.10" W. (approx.)

Cables 10 5 0 1 2 3 4 5 Sea Miles

Natural Scale 1/63500

Bahamas again by the Spanish in the year 1641. After a great deal of changing hands they were ceded to Great Britain in 1783, and have remained in her possession ever since. In 1897 the population of the whole group was estimated at 52,000, the whites being in the proportion of one to six of the coloured population. Watling's Island contains about 600 inhabitants scattered over the surface, with a small settlement called Cockburn Town on the west side, nearly opposite the landfall of Columbus. The seat of the local government is in the island of New Providence, and the inhabitants of Watling's Island and of Rum Cay unite in sending one representative to the House of Assembly. It is high-water, full and change, at Watling's Island at 7 h. 40 m., as it was in the days of Columbus; and these facts form about the sum of the world's knowledge of and interest in Watling's Island to-day.

But it was a different matter on Friday morning, October 12,[1] 1492, when, all having been made snug on board the *Santa Maria*, the Admiral of the Ocean Seas put on his armour and his scarlet cloak over it and prepared to go ashore. The boat was lowered and manned by a crew well armed, and Columbus took with him Rodrigo de Escovedo, the secretary to the expedition, and Rodrigo Sanchez, his overseer; they also took on board Martin Alonso Pinzon and Vincenti Yañez Pinzon, the captains of the other two ships. As they rowed towards the shore they saw a few naked inhabitants, who hid themselves at their approach. Columbus carried with him the royal standard, and the two captains each had a banner of the expedition, which was a square flag with an "F" and a "Y" upon either side, each letter being surmounted by the crown of the sovereigns and a green cross covering the whole. Columbus assembled his little band around him and called upon them to bear witness that in the presence of them all he was taking possession of the island for the King and Queen of Spain; duly making depositions in writing on the spot, and having them signed and witnessed. Then he gave the name of San Salvador to the island and said a prayer; and while this solemn little ceremony was in progress, the astonished natives crept out of their hiding and surrounded the strange, white men. They

[1] This date is reckoned in the old style. The true astronomical date would be October 21, which is the modern anniversary of the discovery.

gesticulated and grovelled and pointed upwards, as though this gang of armed and bearded Spaniards, with the tall white-bearded Italian in the midst of them, had fallen from the skies.

The first interest of the voyagers was in the inhabitants of this delightful land. They found them well-built, athletic-looking men, most of them young, with handsome bodies and intelligent faces. Columbus, eager to begin his missionary work, gave them some red caps and some glass beads, with which he found them so delighted that he had good hopes of making converts, and from which he argued that "they were a people who would better be freed and converted to our Holy Faith by love than by force," which sentence of his contains within itself the whole missionary spirit of the time. These natives, who were the freest people in the world, were to be "freed"; freed or saved from the darkness of their happy innocence and brought to the light of a religion that had just evolved the Inquisition; freed by love if possible, and by red caps and glass beads; if not possible, then freed by force and with guns; but freed they were to be at all costs. It is a tragic thought that, at the very first impact of the Old World upon this Eden of the West, this dismal error was set on foot and the first links in the chain of slavery forged. But for the moment nothing of it was perceptible; nothing but red caps and glass beads, and trinkets and toys, and freeing by love. The sword that Columbus held out to them, in order to find out if they knew the use of weapons, they innocently grasped by the blade and so cut their fingers; and that sword, extended with knowledge and grasped with fearless ignorance, is surely an emblem of the spread of civilisation and of its doubtful blessings in the early stages. Let us hear Columbus himself, as he recorded his first impressions of the natives of Guanahani:—

"Further, it appeared to me that they were a very poor people, in everything. They all go naked as their mothers gave them birth, and the women also, although I only saw one of the latter who was very young, and all those whom I saw were young men, none more than thirty years of age. They were very well built with very handsome bodies, and very good faces. Their hair was almost as coarse as horses' tails, and short, and they wear it over the eyebrows, except a small quantity behind, which they wear long and never cut. Some paint themselves blackish, and they are of the colour of the inhabitants of the Canaries, neither black nor white, and some paint themselves white, some red, some whatever colour they find: and some paint their faces, some all the body, some only the eyes, and some only the nose. They do not carry arms nor know what they are, because I showed them swords and they took them by the edge and ignorantly cut themselves. They have no

iron: their spears are sticks without iron, and some of them have a fish's tooth at the end and others have other things. They are all generally of good height, of pleasing appearance and well built: I saw some who had indications of wounds on their bodies, and I asked them by signs if it was that, and they showed me that other people came there from other islands near by and wished to capture them and they defended themselves: and I believed and believe, that they come here from the continental land to take them captive. They must be good servants and intelligent, as I see that they very quickly say all that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily become Christians, as it appeared to me that they had no sect. If it please our Lord, at the time of my departure, I will take six of them from here to your Highnesses that they may learn to speak. I saw no beast of any kind except parrots on this island.[21]

They very quickly say all that is said to them, and they will very easily become good slaves; good Christians also it appears, since the Admiral's research does not reveal the trace of any religious sect. And finally, "I will take six of them"; ostensibly that they may learn to speak the language, but really that they may form the vanguard of cargo after cargo of slaves ravished from their happy islands of dreams and sunshine and plenty to learn the blessings of Christianity under the whip and the sword. It is all, alas, inevitable; was inevitable from the moment that the keel of Columbus's boat grated upon the shingle of Guanahani. The greater must prey upon the less, the stronger must absorb and dominate the weaker; and the happy gardens of the Golden Cyclades must be spoiled and wasted for the pleasure and enrichment of a corrupting civilisation. But while we recognise the inevitable, and enter into the joy and pride of Columbus and his followers on this first happy morning of their landing, we may give a moment's remembrance to the other side of the picture, and admit that for this generation of innocents the discovery that was to be all gain for the Old World was to be all loss to them. In the meantime, decrees the Admiral, they are to be freed and converted; and "I will take six of them that they may learn to speak."

There are no paths or footprints left in the sea, and the water furrowed on that morning more than four hundred years ago by the keels of Columbus's little fleet is as smooth and trackless as it was before they clove it. Yet if you approach Guanahani from the east during the hours of darkness you also will see a light that waxes and wanes on the horizon. What the light was that Columbus saw is not certain; it was probably

the light from a torch held by some native woman from the door of her hut; but the light that you will see is from the light-house on Dixon Hill, where a tower of coral holds a lamp one hundred and sixty feet above the sea at the north-east point of the island. It was erected in no sentimental spirit, but for very practical purposes, and at a date when Watling's Island had not been identified with the Guanahani of Columbus's landfall; and yet of all the monuments that have been raised to him I can think of nothing more appropriate than this lonely tower that stands by day amid the bright sunshine in the track of the trade-wind, and by night throws its powerful double flash every half-minute across the dark lonely sea. For it was by a light, although not of man's kindling, that Columbus was guided upon his lonely voyage and through many difficulties; amid all his trials and disappointments, dimly as it must have burned sometimes, it never quite went out. Darkness was the name of the sea across which he took his way; darkness, from his religious point of view, was the state of the lands to which he journeyed; and, whatever its subsequent worth may have been, it was a burning fragment from the living torch of the Christian religion that he carried across the world with him, and by which he sought to kindle the fire of faith in the lands of his discovery. So that there is a profound symbolism in those raying beams that now, night after night, month by month, and year after year, shine out across the sea from Watling's Island in the direction of the Old World.

In the preparations for this voyage, and in the conduct and accomplishment of it, the personality of the man Columbus stands clearly revealed. He was seen at his best, as all men are who have a chance of doing the thing for which they are the best fitted. The singleness of aim that can accomplish so much is made manifest in his dogged search for means with which to make his voyage; and his Italian quality of unscrupulousness in the means employed to attain a good end was exercised to the full. The practical seaman in him carried him through the easiest part of his task, which was the actual sailing of his ships from Palos to Guanahani; Martin Alonso Pinzon could have done as much as that. Pinzon, who for reasons which will presently appear failed to reap any glory or profits from the expedition, had in fact a great deal to do with the success of the actual voyage; for less than justice has been done to him

by most historians; and it may not be too much to say that he deserves equal credit with Columbus for the actual discovery of land.[1] But no Martin Alonso Pinzon or any other man of that time known to history had the necessary combination of defective and effective qualities that made Columbus, once he had conceived his glorious hazy idea, spend the best years of his life, first in acquiring the position that would make him listened to by people powerful enough to help him, and then in besieging them in the face of every rebuff and discouragement. Another man, proposing to venture across the unknown ocean to unknown lands, would have required a fleet for his conveyance, and an army for his protection; but Columbus asked for what he thought he had some chance of getting, and for the barest equipment that would carry him across the water. Another man would at least have had a bodyguard; but Columbus relied upon himself, and alone held his motley crew in the bonds of discipline. A Pinzon could have navigated the fleet from Palos to Guanahani; but only a Columbus, only a man burning with belief in himself and in his quest, could have kept that superstitious crowd of loafers and malefactors and gaol-birds to their duties, and bent them to his will. He was destined in after years for situations which were beyond his power to deal with, and for problems that were beyond his grasp; but here at least he was supreme, master of himself and of his material, and a ruler over circumstances. The supreme thing that he had professed to be able to do and which he had guaranteed to do was, in the sublime simplicity of his own phrase, "to discover new lands"; and luck or no luck, help or hindrance, he did it at the very first attempt and in the space of thirty-five days. And although it was from the *Pinta* that the gun was fired, and the first loom of the actual land seen in the early morning, I am glad to think that, of all the number of eager watching men, it was Columbus who first saw the dim tossing light that told him his journey was at an end.

[1] Vignaud, H.: "Histoire Critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb," vol. ii., pp. 331 *et seq.* Paris, 1911.

BOOK II

THE NEW WORLD

CHAPTER I

THE ENCHANTED ISLANDS

COLUMBUS did not intend to remain long at San Salvador. His landfall there, although it signified the realisation of one part of his dream, was only the starting-point of his explorations in the New World. Now that he had made good his undertaking to "discover new lands," he had to make good his assurance that they were full of wealth and would swell the revenues of the King and Queen of Spain. A brief survey of this first island was all he could afford time for; and after the first exquisite impression of the white beach, and the blue curve of the bay sparkling in the sunshine, and the soft prismatic colours of the acanthus beneath the green wall of the woods, had been savoured and enjoyed, he was anxious to push on to the rich lands of the Orient of which he believed this island to be only an outpost.

On the morning after his arrival the natives came crowding down to the beach and got down their canoes, which were dug out of the trunk of a single tree, and some of which were large enough to contain forty or forty-five men. They came paddling out to the ship, sometimes, in the case of the smaller canoes which only held one man, being upset by the surf, and swimming gaily round and righting their canoes again and bailing them out with gourds. They brought balls of spun cotton, and parrots and spears. All their possessions, indeed, were represented in the offerings they made to the strangers. Columbus, whose eye was now very steadily fixed on the main chance, tried to find out if they had any gold, for he noticed that some of them wore in their noses a ring that looked as though it were made of that metal; and by making signs he asked them if there was any more of it to be had. He understood them to say that to the south of the island there dwelt a king who had larger vessels of gold, and a great many of them; he tried to suggest that some of the natives should come and show him the way, but he "saw that they were not interested in going."

The story of the Rheingold was to be enacted over again,

and the whole of the evils that followed in its glittering train to be exemplified in this voyage of discovery. To the natives of these islands, who guarded the yellow metal and loved it merely for its shining beauty, it was harmless and powerless; they could not buy anything with it, nor did they seek by its aid to secure any other enjoyments but the happiness of looking at it and admiring it. As soon as the gold was ravished from their keeping, however, began the reign of lust and cruelty that always has attended and always will attend the knowledge that things can be bought with it. In all its history, since first it was brought up from the dark bowels of the earth to glitter in the light of day, there is no more significant scene than this that took place on the bright sands of San Salvador so long ago—Columbus attentively examining the ring in the nose of a happy savage, and trying to persuade him to show him the place that it was brought from; and the savage "not interested in going."

From his sign-conversation with the natives Columbus understood that there was land to the south or the south-west, and also to the north-west, and that the people from the north-west went to the south-west in search of gold and precious stones. In the meantime he determined to spend the Sunday in making a survey of the island, while the rest of Saturday was passed in barterings with the natives, who were very happy and curious to see all the strange things belonging to the voyagers; and so innocent were their ideas of value that "they give all they have for whatever thing may be given them." Columbus, however, who was busy making calculations, would not allow the members of the crew to take anything more on their own account, ordering that where any article of commerce existed in quantity it was to be acquired for the sovereigns and taken home to Spain.

Early on Sunday morning a boat was prepared from each ship, and a little expedition began to row north about the island. As they coasted the white rocky shores people came running to the beach and calling to them; "giving thanks to God," says Columbus, although this is probably a flight of fancy. When they saw that the boats were not coming to land they threw themselves into the water and came swimming out to them, bringing food and drink. Columbus noticed a tongue of land lying between the north-west arm of the internal lagoon and the sea, and saw that by cutting a canal through it entrance could be

secured to a harbour that would float "as many ships as there are in Christendom." He did not, apparently, make a complete circuit of the island, but returned in the afternoon to the ships, having first collected seven natives to take with him, and got under way again; and before night had fallen San Salvador had disappeared below the north-west horizon.

About mid-day he reached another island to the south-east. He sailed along the coast until evening, when he saw yet another island in the distance to the south-west; and he therefore lay-to for the night. At dawn the next morning he landed on the island and took formal possession of it, naming it Santa Maria de la Concepcion, which is the Rum Cay of the modern charts. As the wind chopped round and he found himself on a lee shore he did not stay there, but sailed again before night. Two of the unhappy prisoners from Guanahani at this point made good their escape by swimming to a large canoe which one of the natives of the new island had rowed out—a circumstance which worried Columbus not a little, since he feared it would give him a bad name with the natives. He tried to counteract it by loading with presents another native who came to barter balls of cotton, and sending him away again.

The effect of all he was seeing, of the bridge of islands that seemed to be stretching towards the south-west and leading him to the region of untold wealth, was evidently very stimulating and exciting to Columbus. His journal is almost incoherent where he attempts to set down what he has got to say. Let us listen to him for a moment:—

"These islands are very green and fertile, and the breezes are very soft, and there may be many things which I do not know, because I did not wish to stop, in order to discover and search many islands to find gold. And since these people make signs thus, that they wear gold on their arms and legs,—and it is gold, because I showed them some pieces which I have,—I cannot fail, with the aid of our Lord, in finding it where it is native. And being in the middle of the gulf between these two islands, that is to say, the island of *Santa Maria* and this large one, which I named *Fernandina*, I found a man alone in a canoe who was going from the island of *Santa Maria* to *Fernandina*, and was carrying a little of his bread which might have been about as large as the fist, and a gourd of water, and a piece of reddish earth reduced to dust and afterwards kneaded, and some dry leaves [1] which must be a thing very much appreciated among them, because they had already brought me some of them as a present at *San Salvador*: and he was carrying a small basket of their kind, in which he had a string of small glass beads and two blancas, by which I knew that he came from the island of *San*

[1] Tobacco.

Salvador, and had gone from there to *Santa Maria* and was going to *Fernandina*. He came to the ship : I caused him to enter it, as he asked to do so, and I had his canoe placed on the ship and had everything which he was carrying guarded : and I ordered that bread and honey be given him to eat and something to drink. And I will go to *Fernandina* thus and will give him everything which belongs to him, that he may give good reports of us. So that, when your Highnesses send here, our Lord pleasing, those who come may receive honour and the Indians will give them of everything which they have."

This hurried gabbling about gold and the aid of our Lord, interlarded with fragments of natural and geographical observation, sounds strangely across the gulf of Time and impresses one with a disagreeable sense of bewildered greed—like that of a dog gulping at the delicacies in his platter and unwilling to do justice to one for fear the others should escape him ; and yet it is a natural bewilderment, and one with which we must do our best to sympathise.

Fernandina was the name which Columbus had already given to Long Island when he sighted it from Santa Maria ; and he reached it in the evening of Tuesday, October 16. The man in the canoe had arrived before him ; and the astute Admiral had the satisfaction of finding that once more his cleverness had been rewarded, and that the man in the canoe had given such glowing accounts of his generosity that there was no difficulty about his getting water and supplies. While the barrels of water were being filled he landed and strolled about in the pleasant groves, observing the islanders and their customs, and finding them on the whole a little more sophisticated than those of San Salvador. The women wore mantillas on their heads and " little pieces of cotton " round their loins—a sufficiently odd costume ; and they appeared to Columbus to be a little more astute than the other islanders, for though they brought cotton in quantities to the ships they exacted payment of beads for it. In the charm and wonder of his walk in this enchanted land he was able for a moment to forget his hunger for gold and to admire the great branching palm-trees, and the fish that " are here so different from ours that it is wonderful. There are some formed like cocks of the finest colours in the world, blue, yellow, red and of all colours, and others tinted in a thousand manners : and the colours are so fine, that there is not a man who does not wonder at them, and who does not take great pleasure in seeing them. Also, there are whales. I saw no beasts on land of any kind except parrots and lizards. A boy told me that he saw a large snake. I did not see sheep nor goats, nor any other beast ;

although I have been here a very short time, as it is midday, still if there had been any, I could not have missed seeing some." Columbus was not a very lucid or exact writer, and he has but two methods of comparison; either a thing is like Spain, or it is not like Spain. The verdure was "in such condition as it is in the month of May in Andalusia"; and the trees "were all as different from ours as day from night, and also the fruits and grasses and the stones and all things." The essay written by a cockney child after a day at the seaside or in the country, is not greatly different from some of the *verbatim* passages of this Journal; and there is a charm in that fact too, for it gives us a picture of Columbus, in spite of his hunt for gold and precious stones, wandering, still a child at heart, in the wonders of the enchanted world to which he had come.

There was trouble on this day, because some of the crew had found an Indian with a piece of gold in his nose, and they got a scolding from Columbus for not detaining him and bartering with him for it. There was bad weather also, with heavy rain and a threatening of tempest; there was a difference of opinion with Martin Alonso Pinzon about which way they should go round the island: but the next day the weather cleared, and the wind settled the direction of their course for them. Columbus, whose eye never missed anything of interest to the sailor and navigator, notes thus early a fact which appears in every book of sailing directions for the Bahama Islands—that the water is so clear and limpid that the bottom can be seen at a great depth; and that navigation is thus possible and even safe among the rock-strewn coasts of the islands, when thus performed by sight and with the sun behind the ship. He was also keenly alive to natural charm and beauty in the new lands that he was visiting, and there are unmistakable fragments of himself in the Journal that speak eloquently of his first impressions. "The singing of the little birds is such that it appears a man would wish never to leave here, and the flocks of parrots obscure the sun."

But life, even to the discoverer of a New World, does not consist of wandering in the groves, and listening to the singing birds, and smelling the flowers, and remembering the May nights of Andalusia. There was gold to be found and the mainland of Cathay to be discovered, and a letter, written by the sovereigns at his earnest request, to be delivered to the Great Khan. The natives had told him of an island called Samoete, to the southward, which was said to contain a quantity of gold. He sailed

thither on the 19th, and called it Isabella; its modern name is Crooked Island. He anchored here and found it to be but another step in the ascending scale of his delight; it was greener and more beautiful than any of the islands he had yet seen. He spent some time looking for the gold, but could not find any; although he heard of the island of Cuba, which he took to be the veritable Cipango. He weighed anchor on October 24, and sailed south-west, encountering some bad weather on the way; but on Sunday the 28th he came up with the north coast of Cuba and entered the mouth of a river which is the modern Nuevitas. To the island of Cuba he gave the name of Juana, in honour of the young prince to whom his son Diego had been appointed a page.

If the other islands had seemed beautiful to him, Cuba seemed like heaven itself. The mountains grandly rising in the interior, the noble rivers and long sweeping plains, the headlands melting into the clear water, and the gorgeous colours and flowers and birds and insects on land acted like a charm on Columbus and his sailors. As they entered the river they lowered a boat in order to go ahead and sound for an anchorage; and two native canoes put off from the shore, but, when they saw the boat approaching, fled again. The Admiral landed and found two empty houses containing nets and hooks and fishing-lines, and one of the strange silent dogs, such as they had encountered on the other island—dogs that pricked their ears and wagged their tails, but that never barked. The Admiral, in spite of his greed for gold and his anxiety to "free" the people of the island, was now acting much more discreetly, and with the genuine good sense which he always possessed and which was only sometimes obscured. He would not allow anything in the empty houses to be disturbed or taken away, and whenever he saw the natives he tried to show them that he intended to do them no harm, and to win their good will by making them presents of beads and toys for which he would take no return. As he went on up the river the scenery became more and more enchanting, so that he felt quite unhappy at not being able to express all the wonders and beauties that he saw. In the pure air and under the serene blue of the sky those matchless hues of blossom and foliage threw a rainbow-coloured garment on either bank of the river; the flamingoes, the parrots and woodpeckers and humming-birds calling to one another

and flying among the tree-tops, made the upper air also seem alive and shot with all the colours of the rainbow. Christopher, walking amid these gorgeous scenes, awed and solemnised by the strangeness and magnificence of nature around him, tries to identify something that he knows; and thinks that, amid all these strange chorusings of unknown birds, he hears the familiar note of a nightingale. Amid all his raptures, however, the main chance is not forgotten; everything that he sees he translates into some terms of practical utility. Just as on the voyage out every seaweed or fish or flying bird that he saw was hailed by him as a sign that land was near, so amid the beauty of this virgin world everything that he sees is taken to indicate either that he is close upon the track of the gold, or that he must be in Cipango, or that the natives will be easy to convert to Christianity. In the fragrance of the woods of Cuba, Columbus thought that he smelled Oriental spices, which Marco Polo had described as abounding in Cipango; when he walked by the shore and saw the shells of pearl oysters, he believed the island to be loaded with pearls and precious stones; when he saw a scrap of tinsel or bright metal adorning a native, he argued that there was a gold mine close at hand. And so he went on in an increasing whirl of bewildering enchantment from anchorage to anchorage and from island to island, always being led on by that yellow will-o'-the-wisp, gold, and always believing that the wealth of the Orient would be his on the morrow. As he coasted along towards the west he entered the river which he called Rio de Mares. He found a large village here full of palm-branch houses furnished with chairs and hammocks and adorned with wooded masks and statues; but in spite of his gentleness and offer of gifts the inhabitants all fled to the mountains, while he and his men walked curiously through the deserted houses.

On Tuesday, October 30, Martin Alonso Pinzon, whose communications the Admiral had by this time reason to respect, came with some exciting news. It seemed that the Indians from San Salvador who were on board the *Pinta* had told him that beyond the promontory, named by Columbus the Cape of Palms, there was a river, four days' journey upon which would bring one to the city of Cuba, which was very rich and large and abounded with gold; and that the king of that country was at war with a monarch whom they called *Cami*, and whom Pinzon identified with the Great Khan. More than this, these natives assured him that the land they were on at present

was the mainland itself, and that they could not be very far from Cathay. Columbus for once found himself in agreement with Martin Alonso. The well-thumbed copy of Marco Polo was doubtless brought out, and abundant evidence found in it; and it was decided to despatch a little embassy to this city in order to gain information about its position and wealth. When they continued their course, however, and rounded the cape, no river appeared; they sailed on, and yet promontory after promontory was opened ahead of them; and as the wind turned against them and the weather was very threatening they decided to turn back and anchor again in the Rio de Mares.

Columbus was now, as he thought, hot upon the track of the Great Khan himself; and on the 1st of November he sent boats ashore and told the sailors to get information from the houses; but the inhabitants fled shyly into the woods. Having once postulated the existence of the Great Khan in this immediate territory, Columbus, as his habit was, found that everything fitted with the theory; and he actually took the flight of the natives, although it had occurred on a dozen other occasions, as a proof that they mistook his bands of men for marauding expeditions despatched by the great monarch himself. He therefore recalled them, and sent a boat ashore with an Indian interpreter who, standing in the boat at the edge of the water, called upon the natives to draw near, and harangued them. He assured them of the peaceable intentions of the great Admiral, and that he had nothing whatever to do with the Great Khan; which cannot very greatly have thrilled the Cubans, who knew no more about the Great Khan than they did about Columbus. The interpreter then swam ashore and was well received; so well that in the evening some sixteen canoes came off to the ships bringing cotton yarn and spears for traffic. Columbus, with great astuteness, forbade any trading in cotton, or indeed in anything at all except gold, hoping by this means to make the natives produce their treasures; and he would no doubt have been successful if the natives had possessed any gold, but as the poor wretches had nothing but the naked skins they stood up in, and the few spears and pots and rolls of cotton that they were offering, the Admiral's astuteness was for once thrown away. There was one man, however, with a silver ring in his nose, who was understood to say that the king lived four days' journey in the interior, and that messengers had been sent to him to tell him of the arrival of the strange ships; which messengers would doubtless soon return bringing merchants with them to trade

with the ships. If this native was lying he showed great ingenuity in inventing the kind of story that his questioners wanted; but it is more likely that his utterances were interpreted by Columbus in the light of his own ardent beliefs. At any rate it was decided to send at once a couple of envoys to this great city, and not to wait for the arrival of the merchants. Two Spaniards, Rodrigo de Jerez and Luis de Torres, the interpreter to the expedition—who had so far found little use for his Hebrew and Chaldean—were chosen; and with them were sent two Indians, one from San Salvador and the other a local native who went as guide. Red caps and beads and hawks' bells were duly provided, and a message for the king was given to them telling him that Columbus was waiting with letters and presents from the Spanish sovereigns, which he was to deliver personally.

After the envoys had departed, Columbus, whose ships were anchored in a large basin of deep water with a clean and steep beach, decided to take the opportunity of having the vessels careened. Their hulls were covered with shell and weed; the caulking, which had been dishonestly done at Palos, had also to be attended to; so the ships were beached and hove down one at a time—an unnecessary precaution, as it turned out, for there was no sign of treachery on the part of the natives. While the men were making fires to heat their tar they noticed that the burning wood sent forth a heavy odour which was like mastic; and the Admiral, now always busy with optimistic calculations, reckoned that there was enough in that vicinity to furnish a thousand quintals every year. While the work on the ships was going forward he employed himself in his usual way, going ashore, examining the trees and vegetables and fruits, and holding such communication as he was able with the natives. He was up every morning at dawn, at one time directing the work of his men, at another going ashore after some birds that he had seen; and as dawn comes early in those islands his day was probably a long one, and it is likely that he was in bed soon after dark. On the day that he went shooting, Martin Alonso Pinzon was waiting for him on his return; this time not to make any difficulties or independent proposals, but to show him two pieces of cinnamon that one of his men had got from an Indian who was carrying a quantity of it. "Why did the man not get it all from him?" says greedy Columbus. "Because of the prohibition of the Admiral that no one should do any trading," says Martin Alonso, and conceives himself to have

scored; for truly these two men do not love each other. The boatswain of the *Pinta*, adds Martin Alonso, has found whole trees of it. " The Admiral then went there and found that it was not cinnamon." The Admiral was omnipotent; if he had said that it was manna they would have had to make it so, and as he chose to say that it was not cinnamon, we must take his word for it, as Martin Alonso certainly had to do; so that it was the Admiral who scored this time. Columbus, however, now on the track of spices, showed some cinnamon and pepper to the natives; and the obliging creatures " said by signs that there was a great deal of it towards the south-east." Columbus then showed them some gold and pearls; and " certain old men " replied that in a place they called *Bohio* there was any amount of gold; the people wore it in their ears and on their arms and legs; and there were pearls also, and large ships and merchandise—all to the south-east. Finding this information, which was probably entirely untrue and merely a polite effort to do what was expected of them, well received, the natives added that " a long distance from there, there were men with one eye, and other men with dogs' snouts who ate men, and that when they caught a man they beheaded him and drank his blood." . . . Soon after this the Admiral went on board again and began to write up his Journal, solemnly entering all these facts in it. It is the most childish nonsense; but after all, how interesting and credible it must have been! To live thus smelling the most heavenly perfumes, breathing the most balmy air, viewing the most lovely scenes, and to be always hot upon the track of gold and pearls and spices and wealth and dog-nosed, blood-drinking monstrosities—what an adventure, what a vivid piece of living!

After a few days—on Tuesday, November 6—the two men who had been sent inland to the great and rich city came back again with their report. Alas for visions of the Great Khan! The city turned out to be a village of fifty houses with twenty people in each house. The envoys had been received with great solemnity; and all the men " as well as the women " came to see them, and lodged them in a fine house. The chief people in the village came and kissed their hands and feet, hailing them as visitors from the skies, and seating them in two chairs, while they sat round on the floor. The native interpreter, doubtless according to instructions, then told them " how the Christians

lived and how they were good people"; and I would give a great deal to have heard that brief address. Afterwards the men went out and the women came in, also kissing the hands and feet of the visitors, and "trying them to see if they were of flesh and of bone like themselves." The results were evidently so satisfactory that the strangers were implored to remain at least five days. The real business of the expedition was then broached. Had they any gold or pearls? Had they any cinnamon or spices? Answer, as usual: "No, but they thought there was a great deal of it to the south-east." The interest of the visitors then evaporated, and they set out for the coast again; but they found that at least five hundred men and women wanted to come with them, since they believed that they were returning to heaven. On their journey back the two Spaniards noticed many people smoking, as the Admiral himself had done a few days before; and this is the first known discovery of tobacco by Europeans. They saw a great many geese, and the strange dogs that did not bark; and they saw potatoes also, although they did not know what they were. Columbus, having heard this report, and contemplating these gentle amiable creatures, so willing to give all they had in return for a scrap of rubbish, feels his heart lifted in a pious aspiration that they might know the benefits of the Christian religion. "I have to say, Most Serene Princes," he writes,

"that by means of devout religious persons knowing their language well, all would soon become Christians: and thus I hope in our Lord that Your Highnesses will appoint such persons with great diligence in order to turn to the Church such great peoples, and that they will convert them, even as they have destroyed those who would not confess the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: and after their days, as we are all mortal, they will leave their realms in a very tranquil condition and freed from heresy and wickedness, and will be well received before the Eternal Creator, Whom may it please to give them a long life and a great increase of larger realms and dominions, and the will and disposition to spread the holy Christian religion, as they have done up to the present time, Amen. To-day I will launch the ship and make haste to start on Thursday, in the name of God, to go to the south-east and seek gold and spices, and discover land."[1]

Thus Christopher Columbus, in the Name of God, November 11, 1492.

CHAPTER II

THE EARTHLY PARADISE

WHEN Columbus weighed anchor on the 12th of November he took with him six captive Indians. It was his intention to go in search of the island of Babeque, which the Indians alleged lay about thirty leagues to the east-south-east, and where, they said, the people gathered gold out of the sand with candles at night, and afterwards made bars of it with a hammer. They told him this by signs; and we have only one more instance of the Admiral's facility in interpreting signs in favour of his own beliefs. It is only a few days later that in the same Journal he says, "The people of these lands do not understand me, nor do I nor any other person I have with me understand them; and these Indians I am taking with me, many times understand things contrary to what they are." It was a fault at any rate not exclusively possessed by the Indians, who were doubtless made the subject of many philological experiments on the part of the interpreter; all that they seemed to have learned at this time were certain religious gestures, such as making the Sign of the Cross, which they did continually, greatly to the edification of the crew.

In order to keep these six natives in a good temper Columbus kidnapped "seven women, large and small, and three children," in order, he alleged, that the men might conduct themselves better in Spain because of having their "wives" with them; although whether these assorted women were indeed the wives of the kidnapped natives must at the best be a doubtful matter. The three children, fortunately, had their father and mother with them; but that was only because the father, having seen his wife and children kidnapped, came and offered to go with them of his own accord. This taking of the women raises a question which must be in the mind of any one who studies this extraordinary voyage—the question of the treatment of native women by the Spaniards. Columbus is entirely silent on the subject; but taking into account the nature of the

Spanish rabble that formed his company, and his own views as to the right which he had to possess the persons and goods of the native inhabitants, I am afraid that there can be very little doubt that in this matter there is a good reason for his silence. So far as Columbus himself was concerned, it is probable that he was innocent enough; he was not a sensualist by nature, and he was far too much interested and absorbed in the principal objects of his expedition, and had too great a sense of his own personal dignity, to have indulged in excesses that would, thus sanctioned by him, have produced a very disastrous effect on the somewhat rickety discipline of his crew. He was too wise a master, however, to forbid anything that it was not in his power to prevent; and it is probable that he shut his eyes to much that, if he did not tolerate it, he at any rate regarded as a matter of no very great importance. His crew had by this time learned to know their commander well enough not to commit under his eyes offences for which he would have been sure to punish them.

For two days they ran along the coast with a fair wind; but on the 14th a head wind and heavy sea drove them into the shelter of a deep harbour called by Columbus Puerto del Principe, which is the modern Tanamo. The number of islands off this part of the coast of Cuba confirmed Columbus in his profound geographical error; he took them to be "those innumerable islands which in the maps of the world are placed at the end of the east." He erected a great wooden cross on an eminence here, as he always did when he took possession of a new place, and made some boat excursions among the islands in the harbour. On the 17th of November two of the six youths whom he had taken on board the week before swam ashore and escaped. When he started again on his voyage he was greatly inconvenienced by the wind, which veered about between the north and south of east, and was generally a foul wind for him. There is some difference of opinion as to what point of the wind the ships of Columbus's time would sail on; but there is no doubt that they were extremely unhandy in anything approaching a head wind, and that they were practically no good at all at beating to windward. The shape of their hulls, the ungainly erections ahead and astern, and their comparatively light hold on the water, would cause them to drift to leeward faster than they could work to windward. In

this head wind, therefore, Columbus found that he was making very little headway, although he stood out for long distances to the northward. On Wednesday, November 21, occurred a most disagreeable incident, which might easily have resulted in the Admiral's never reaching Spain alive. Some time in the afternoon he noticed the *Pinta* standing away ahead of him in a direction which was not the course which he was steering; and he signalled her to close up with him. No answer, however, was made to his signal, which he repeated, but to which he failed to attract any response. He was standing south at the time, the wind being well in the north-east; and Martin Alonso Pinzon, whose caravel pointed into the wind much better than the unhandy *Santa Maria*, was standing to the east. When evening fell he was still in sight, at a distance of sixteen miles. Columbus was really concerned, and fired lombards and flew more signals of invitation; but there was no reply. In the evening he shortened sail and burned a torch all night, "because it appeared that Martin Alonso was returning to me; and the night was very clear, and there was a nice little breeze by which to come to me if he wished." But he did not wish, and he did not come.

Martin Alonso has in fact taken rather a large view of his duties. He has got the fastest ship, he has got a picked company of his own men from Palos; he has got an Indian on board, moreover, who has guaranteed to take him straight to where the gold is; and he has a very agreeable plan of going and getting it, and returning to Spain with the first news and the first wealth. There is a chance of his succeeding, which is a matter of serious regret and trouble to the Admiral, who sits writing up his Journal by the swinging lamp in his little cabin. To that friend and confidant he pours out his troubles and his long list of grievances against Martin Alonso, adding, "*He has done and said many other things to me.*" Up on deck the torch is burning to light the wanderer back again, if only he will come; and there is "a nice little breeze" by which to come if he wishes; but Martin Alonso has wishes quite other than that

The *Pinta* was out of sight the next morning, and the little *Niña* was all that the Admiral had to rely upon for convoy. They were now near the east end of the north coast of Cuba, and they stood in to a harbour which the Admiral called Santa Catalina, and which is now called Cayo de Moa. As the import-

ance of the *Niña* to the expedition had been greatly increased by the defection of the *Pinta*, Columbus went on board and examined her. He found that some of her spars were in danger of giving way; and as there was a forest of pine-trees rising from the shore, he was able to procure a new mizzen mast and latine yard in case it should be necessary to replace those of the *Niña*. The next morning he weighed anchor at sunrise and continued east along the coast. He had now arrived at the extreme end of Cuba, and was puzzled as to what course he should take. Believing Cuba, as he did, to be the mainland of Cathay, he would have liked to follow the coast in its trend to the south-west, in the hope of coming upon the rich city of Quinsay; but on the other hand there was looming to the south-west some land which the natives with him assured him was Bohio, the place where all the gold was. He therefore held on his course; but when the Indians found that he was really going to these islands they became very much alarmed, and made signs that the people would eat them if they went there; and, in order further to dissuade the Admiral, they added that the people there had only one eye, and the faces of dogs. As it did not suit Columbus to believe them, he said that they were lying and that he "felt" that the island must belong to the domain of the Great Khan. He therefore continued his course, seeing many beautiful and enchanting bays opening before him, and longing to go into them, but heroically stifling his curiosity, "because he was detained more than he desired by the pleasure and delight he felt in seeing and gazing on the beauty and freshness of those countries wherever he entered, and because he did not wish to be delayed in prosecuting what he was engaged upon; and for these reasons he remained that night beating about and standing off and on until day." He could not trust himself, that is to say, to anchor in these beautiful harbours, for he knew he would be tempted to go ashore and waste valuable time exploring the woods; and so he remained instead beating about in the open sea.

As it was, what with contrary winds and his own indecision as to which course he should pursue, it was the 6th December before he came up with the beautiful island of Hayti and, having sent the *Niña* in front to explore for a harbour, entered the Mole Saint Nicholas, which he called Puerto Maria. Towards the east he saw an island shaped like a turtle, and this island he named Tortuga; and the harbour, which he entered that evening on the hour of Vespers, he called Saint Nicholas, as

it was the feast of that saint. Once more his description flounders among superlatives: he thought Cuba was perfect; but he finds the new island more perfect still. The climate is like May in Cordova; the tracts of arable land and fertile valleys and high mountains are like those in Castile; he finds mullet like those in Castile; soles and other fish like those in Castile; nightingales and other small birds like those in Castile; myrtle and other trees and grasses like those in Castile! In short, this new land is so like Spain, only more wonderful and beautiful, that he christens it *Española*.

They stayed two days in the harbour of Saint Nicholas, and then began to coast eastwards along the shores of Española. Their best progress was made at dawn and sunset, when the land breeze blew off the island; and during the day they encountered a good deal of colder weather and easterly winds, which made their progress slow. Every day they put in at one or other of the natural harbours in which that beautiful coast abounds; every day they saw natives on the shores who generally fled at their approach, but were often prevailed upon to return and to converse with the natives on board the Admiral's ship, and to receive presents and bring parrots and bits of gold in exchange. On one day a party of men foraging ashore saw a beautiful young girl, who fled at their approach; and they chased her a long way through the woods, finally capturing her and bringing her on board. Columbus "caused her to be clothed"—doubtless a diverting occupation for Rodrigo, Juan, Garcia, Pedro, William, and the rest of them, although for the poor, shy, trembling captive not diverting at all—and sent her ashore again loaded with beads and brass rings, to act as a decoy. Having sown this good seed, the Admiral waited for a night, and then sent a party of men ashore, "well prepared with arms and adapted for such an affair," to have some conversation with the people. The innocent harvest was duly reaped; the natives met the Spaniards with gifts of food and drink, and understanding that the Admiral would like to have a parrot, they sent as many parrots as were wanted. The husband of the girl who had been captured and clothed came back with her to the shore with a large body of natives, in order to thank the Admiral for his kindness and clemency; and their confidence was not misplaced, as the Admiral did not at that moment wish to do any more kidnapping.

The Spaniards were more and more amazed and impressed with the beauty and fertility of these islands. The lands were

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the other islands, and the women much fairer; inde
had not been so much exposed to the sun, and if they cou
be clothed in the decent garments of civilisation, the Admi
thought that their skins would be as white as those of the women of Spain—which was only another argument for bringing them within the fold of the Holy Catholic Church. The men were powerful and apparently harmless; they showed no truculent or suspicious spirit; they had no knowledge of arms; a thousand of them would not face three Christians; and "so they are suitable to be governed and made to work and sow and do everything else that shall be necessary, and to build villages and be taught to wear clothing and observe our customs." At present, you see, they are but poor happy heathens, living in a paradise of their own, where the little birds sing all through the warm nights, and the rivers murmur through flowery meadows, and no one has any knowledge of arms or desire of such knowledge, and every one goes naked and unashamed. High time, indeed, that they should be taught to wear clothing and observe our customs.

The local chief came on a visit of state to the ship; and the Admiral paid him due honour, telling him that he came as an envoy from the greatest sovereigns in the world. But this charming king, or *cacique*, as they called him, would not believe this; he thought that Columbus was, for reasons of modesty, speaking less than the truth—a new charge to bring against our Christopher! He believed that the Spaniards came from heaven, and that the realms of the sovereigns of Castile were in the heavens and not in this world. He took some refreshment, as his councillors did also, little dreaming, poor wretches, what in after years was to come to them through all this palavering and exchanging of presents. The immediate result

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[redacted]did not believe it ; his sublime habit of
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[redacted]e Great Khan out of his head ; and his present theory
[redacted]hat this island, being close to the mainland of Cathay,
[redacted]as visited by the armies of the Great Khan, and that it was his men who had used the arrows and made war upon the natives. It was no good for the natives to show him some of their mutilated bodies, and to tell him that the cannibals ate them piecemeal ; he had no use for such information. His mind was like a sieve of which the size of the meshes could be adjusted at will ; everything that was not germane to the idea of the moment fell through it, and only confirmative evidence remained ; and at the moment he was not believing any stories which did not prove that the Great Khan was, so to speak, just round the corner. If they talked about gold he would listen to them ; and so the *cacique* brought him a piece of gold the size of his hand, and, breaking it into pieces, gave it to him a bit at a time. This the Admiral took to be a sign of great intelligence. They told him there was gold at Tortuga, but he preferred to believe that it came from *Babeque*, which may have been Jamaica and may have been nothing at all. But his theory was that it existed on Española only in small pieces because that country was so rich that the natives had no need for it ; an economic theory which one grows dizzy in pondering. At any rate " the Admiral believed that he was very near the fountain-head, and that Our Lord was about to show him where the gold originates."

On Tuesday, December 18, the ships were all dressed in honour of a religious anniversary, and the *cacique*, hearing the firing of the lombards with which the festival was greeted, came down to the shore to see what was the matter. As Columbus was sitting at dinner on deck beneath the poop the *cacique* arrived with all his people ; and the account of his visit is preserved in Columbus's own words.

"As he entered the ship he found that I was eating at the table below the stern forecastle, and he came quickly to seat himself beside me, and would not allow me to go to meet him or get up from the table, but only that I should eat. I thought that he would like to eat some of our viands: and I then ordered that things should be brought him to eat. And when he entered under the forecastle, he signed with his hand that all his people should remain without, and they did so with the greatest haste and respect in the world, and all seated themselves on the deck, except two men of mature age whom I took to be his counsellors and governors, and who came and seated themselves at his feet: and of the viands which I placed before him he took of each one as much as may be taken for a salutation, and then he sent the rest to his people and they all ate some of it, and he did the same with the drink, which he only touched to his mouth, and then gave it to the others in the same way, and it was all done in wonderful state and with very few words, and whatever he said, according to what I was able to understand, was very formal and prudent, and those two looked in his face and spoke for him and with him, and with great respect.

"After eating, a page brought a belt which is like those of Castile in shape, but of a different make, which he took and gave me, and also two wrought pieces of gold, which were very thin, as I believe they obtain very little of it here, although I consider they are very near the place where it has its home, and that there is a great deal of it. I saw that a drapery that I had upon my bed pleased him. I gave it to him, and some very good amber beads which I wore around my neck and some red shoes and a flask of orange-flower water, with which he was so pleased it was wonderful; and he and his governors and counsellors were very sorry that they did not understand me, nor I them. Nevertheless I understand that he told me that if anything from here would satisfy me that all the island was at my command. I sent for some beads of mine, where as a sign I have an 'excelente' of gold upon which the images of your Highnesses are engraved, and showed it to him, and again told him the same as yesterday, that your Highnesses command and rule over all the best part of the world, and that there are no other such great Princes: and I showed him the royal banners and the others with the cross, which he held in great estimation: and he said to his counsellors that your Highnesses must be great Lords, since you had sent me here from so far without fear: and many other things happened which I did not understand, except that I very well saw he considered everything as very wonderful."

Later in the day Columbus got into talk with an old man who told him that there was a great quantity of gold to be found on some island about a hundred leagues away; that there was one island that was all gold; and that in the others there was such a quantity that the natives gathered it and sifted it with sieves and made it into bars. The old man pointed out vaguely the direction in which this wonderful country lay; and if he had not been one of the principal persons belonging to the King, Columbus would have detained him and taken him with him; but he decided that he had paid the *cacique* too much

respect to make it right that he should kidnap one of his retinue. He determined, however, to go and look for the gold. Before he left he had a great cross erected in the middle of the Indian village; and as he made sail out of the harbour that evening he could see the Indians kneeling round the cross and adoring it. He sailed eastward, anchoring for a day in the Bay of Acul, which he called *Cabo de Caribata*, receiving something like an ovation from the natives, and making them presents and behaving very graciously and kindly to them.

It was at this time that Columbus made the acquaintance of a man whose character shines like a jewel amid the dismal scenes that afterwards accompanied the first bursting of the wave of civilisation on these happy shores. This was the king of that part of the island, a young man named Guacanagari. This king sent out a large canoe full of people to the Admiral's ship, with a request that Columbus would land in his country, and a promise that the chief would give him whatever he had. There must have been an Intelligence Department in the island, for the chief seemed to know what would be most likely to attract the Admiral, and with his messengers he sent out a belt with a large golden mask attached to it. Unfortunately the natives on board the Admiral's ship could not understand Guacanagari's messengers, and nearly the whole of the day was passed in talking before the sense of their message was finally made out by means of signs. In the evening some Spaniards were sent ashore to see if they could not get some gold; but Columbus, who had evidently had some recent experience of their avariciousness, and who was anxious to keep on good terms with the chiefs of the island, sent his secretary with them to see that they did nothing unjust or unreasonable. He was scrupulous to see that the natives got their bits of glass and beads in exchange for the gold; and it is due to him to remember that now, as always, he was rigid in regulating his conduct with other men in accordance with his ideas of justice and honour, however elastic those ideas may seem to have been. The ruffianly crew had in their minds only the immediate possession of what they could get from the Indians; the Admiral had in his mind the whole possession of the islands and the bodies and souls of its inhabitants. If you take a piece of gold without giving a glass bead in exchange for it, it is called stealing; if you take a country and its inhabitants, and steal their peace from them, and give them blood and servitude in exchange for it, it is called colonisation and empire-building. Every one

understands the distinction; but so few people see the difference that Columbus of all men may be excused for his unconsciousness of it.

Indeed Columbus was seeing yellow at this point in his career. The word "gold" is scattered throughout every page of his Journal; he can understand nothing that the natives say to him except that there is a great quantity of gold somewhere about. He is surrounded by natives pressing presents upon him, protesting their homage, and assuring him (so he thinks) that there are any amount of gold mines; and no wonder that the yellow light blinds his eyes and confounds his senses, and that sometimes, even when the sun has gone down and the natives have retired to their villages and he sits alone in the seclusion of his cabin, the glittering motes still dance before his eyes and he becomes mad, maudlin, ecstatic. . . . The light flickers in the lamp as the ship swings a little on the quiet tide and a night breeze steals through the cabin door; the sound of voices ashore is heard dimly across the water; the brain of the Admiral, overfilled with wonders and promises and hopes, sends its message to the trembling hand that holds the pen, and the incoherent words stream out on the ink, "*May our Lord in His mercy direct me until I find this gold, I say this Mine, because I have many people here who say that they know it.*"

On Christmas Eve a serious misfortune befell Columbus. What with looking for gold, and trying to understand the people who talked about it, and looking after his ships and writing up his Journal, he had had practically no sleep for two days and a night; and at eleven o'clock on the 24th of December, the night being fine and his ship sailing along the coast with a light land breeze, he decided to lie down to get some sleep. There were no difficulties in navigation to be feared, because the ship's boats had been rowed the day before a distance of about ten miles ahead on the course which they were then steering and had seen that there was open water all the way. The wind fell calm; and the man at the helm, having nothing to do, and feeling sleepy, called a ship's boy to him, gave him the helm, and went off himself to lie down. This of course was against all rules; but as the Admiral was in his cabin and there was no one to tell them otherwise, the watch on deck thought it a very good opportunity to rest. Suddenly

the boy felt the rudder catch upon something, saw the ship swinging, and immediately afterwards heard the sound of tide ripples. He cried out; and in a moment Columbus, who was sleeping the light sleep of an anxious shipmaster, came tumbling up to see what was the matter. The current, which flows in that place at a speed of about two knots, had carried the ship on to a sandbank; but she touched so quietly that it was hardly felt. Close on the heels of Columbus came the master of the ship and the delinquent watch; and the Admiral immediately ordered them to launch the ship's boat and lay out an anchor astern so that they could warp her off. The wretches lowered the boat, but instead of getting the anchor on board rowed off in the direction of the *Niña*, which was lying a mile and a half to windward. As soon as Columbus saw what they were doing he ran to the side and, seeing that the tide was falling and that the ship had swung round across the bank, ordered the remainder of the crew to cut away the mainmast and throw the deck hamper overboard, in order to lighten the ship. This took some time; the tide was falling, and the ship beginning to heel over on her beam; and by the time it was done the Admiral saw that it would be of no use, for the ship's seams had opened and she was filling.

At this point the miserable crew in the ship's boat came back, the loyal people on the *Niña* having refused to receive them and sent them back to the assistance of the Admiral. But it was now too late to do anything to save the ship; and as he did not know but that she might break up, Columbus decided to tranship the people to the *Niña*, who had by this time sent her own boat. The whole company boarded the *Niña*, on which the Admiral beat about miserably till morning in the vicinity of his doomed ship. Then he sent Diego de Arana, the brother of Beatriz and a trusty friend, ashore in a boat to beg the help of the King; and Guacanagari immediately sent his people with large canoes to unload the wrecked ship, which was done with great efficiency and despatch, and the whole of her cargo and fittings stored on shore under a guard. And so farewell to the *Santa Maria*, whose bones were thenceforward to bleach upon the shores of Hayti, or incongruously adorn the dwellings of the natives. She may have been "a bad sailer and unfit for discovery"; but no seaman looks without emotion upon the wreck of a ship whose stem has cut the waters of home, which has carried him safely over thousands of uncharted miles, and which has for so long been his shelter and sanctuary.

At sunrise the kind-hearted *cacique* came down to the *Niña*, where Columbus had taken up his quarters, and with tears in his eyes begged the Admiral not to grieve at his losses, for that he, the *cacique*, would give him everything that he possessed; that he had already given two large houses to the Spaniards from the *Santa Maria* who had been obliged to encamp on shore, and that he would provide more accommodation and help if necessary. In fact, the day which had been ushered in so disastrously turned into a very happy one; and before it was over Columbus had decided that, as he could not take the whole of his company home on the *Niña*, he would establish a settlement on shore so that the men who were left behind could collect gold and store it until more ships could be sent from Spain. The natives came buzzing round anxious to barter whatever they had for hawks' bells, which apparently were the most popular of the toys that had been brought for bartering; "they shouted and showed the pieces of gold, saying *chuq, chuq*, for hawks' bells, as they are in a likely state to become crazy for them." The *cacique* was delighted to see that the Admiral was pleased with the gold that was brought to him, and he cheered him up by telling him that there was any amount in *Cibao*, which Columbus of course took for Cipango. The *cacique* entertained Columbus to a repast on shore, at which the monarch wore a shirt and a pair of gloves that Columbus had given him; "and he rejoiced more over the gloves than anything that had been given him." Columbus was pleased with his clean and leisurely method of eating, and with his dainty rubbing of his hands with herbs after he had eaten. After the repast Columbus gave a little demonstration of bow-and-arrow shooting and the firing of lombards and muskets, all of which astonished and impressed the natives.

The afternoon was spent in deciding on a site for the fortress which was to be constructed; and Columbus had no difficulty in finding volunteers among the crews to remain in the settlement. He promised to leave with them provisions of bread and wine for a year, a ship's boat, seeds for sowing crops, and a carpenter, a caulker, a gunner, and a cooper. Before the day was out he was already figuring up the profits that would arise out of his misfortune of the day before; and he decided that it was the act of God which had cast his ship away in order that this settlement should be founded. He hoped that the settlers would have a ton of gold ready for him when he came back from Castile, so that, as he had said in the glittering camp

of Santa Fé, where perhaps no one paid very much heed to him, there might be such a profit as would provide for the conquest of Jerusalem and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. After all, if he was greedy for gold, he had a pious purpose for its employment.

The last days of the year were very busy ones for the members of the expedition. Assisted by the natives, they were building the fort which, in memory of the day on which it was founded, Columbus called *La Villa de la Navidad.* The Admiral spent much time with King Guacanagari, who " loved him so much that it was wonderful," and wished to cover him all over with gold before he went away, and begged him not to go before it was done. On December 27 there was some good news ; a caravel had been seen entering a harbour a little farther along the coast ; and as this could only mean that the *Pinta* had returned, Columbus borrowed a canoe from the king, and despatched a sailor in it to carry news of his whereabouts to the *Pinta.* While it was away Guacanagari collected all the other kings and chiefs who were subject to him, and held a kind of *durbar.* They all wore their crowns ; and Guacanagari took off his crown and placed it on Columbus's head ; and the Admiral, not to be outdone, took from his own neck " a collar of good bloodstones and very beautiful beads of fine colours, which appeared very good in all parts, and placed it upon the King ; and he took off a cloak of fine scarlet cloth which he had put on that day, and clothed the King with it ; and he sent for some coloured buskins which he made him put on, and placed upon his finger a large silver ring "—all of which gives us a picturesque glimpse into the contents of the Admiral's wardrobe, and a very agreeable picture of King Guacanagari, whom we must now figure as clothed, in addition to his shirt and gloves, in a pair of coloured buskins, a collar of bloodstones, a scarlet cloak and a silver ring.

But the time was running short ; the Admiral, hampered as he was by the possession of only one small ship, had now but one idea, which was to get back to Castile as quickly as possible, report the result of his discoveries, and come back again with a larger and more efficient equipment. Before he departed he had an affectionate leave-taking with King Guacanagari ; he gave him another shirt, and also provided a demonstration of the effect of lombards by having one loaded,

and firing at the old *Santa Maria* where she lay hove down on the sandbank. The shot went clean through her hull and fell into the sea beyond, and produced what might be called a very strong moral effect, although an unnecessary one, on the natives. He then set about the very delicate business of organising the settlement. In all forty-two men were to remain behind, with Diego de Arana in the responsible position of chief lieutenant, assisted by Pedro Gutierrez and Rodrigo de Escovedro, the nephew of Friar Juan Perez of La Rabida. To these three he delegated all his powers and authority as Admiral and Viceroy; and then, having collected the colonists, gave them a solemn address. First, he reminded them of the goodness of God to them, and advised them to remain worthy of it by obeying the Divine command in all their actions. Second, he ordered them, as a representative of the Sovereigns of Spain, to obey the captain whom he had appointed for them as they would have obeyed himself. Third, he urged them to show respect and reverence towards King Guacanagari and his chiefs, and to the inferior chiefs, and to avoid annoying them or tormenting them, since they were to remain in a land that was as yet under native dominion; to "strive and watch by their soft and honest speech to gain their good-will and keep their friendship and love, so that he should find them as friendly and favourable and more so when he returned." Fourth, he commanded them "and begged them earnestly" to do no injury and use no force against any natives; to take nothing from them against their will; and especially to be on their guard to avoid injury or violence to the women, "by which they would cause scandal and set a bad example to the Indians and show the infamy of the Christians." Fifth, he charged them not to scatter themselves or leave the place where they then were, but to remain together until he returned. Sixth, he "animated" them to suffer their solitude and exile cheerfully and bravely, since they had willingly chosen it. The seventh order was, that they should get help from the King to send boat expeditions in search of the gold mines; and lastly, he promised that he would petition the Sovereigns to honour them with special favours and rewards. To this very manly, wise and humane address the people listened with some emotion, assuring Columbus that they placed their hopes in him, "begging him earnestly to remember them always, and that as quickly as he could he should give them the great joy which they anticipated from his coming again."

All of which things being done, the ships loaded and provisioned, and the Admiral's final directions given, he makes his farewells and weighs anchor at sunrise on Friday, January 4, 1493. Among the little crowd on the shore who watch the *Niña* growing smaller in the distance is our old friend William of Galway, tired of the crazy confinement of a ship and anxious for shore adventures. He is to have his fill of them, as it happens; adventures that are to bring to the settlers a sudden cloud of blood and darkness, and for the islanders a brief return to their ancient peace. But death waits for William in the sunshine and silence of Española.

CHAPTER III

THE VOYAGE HOME

COLUMBUS did not stand out to sea on his homeward course immediately, but still coasted along the shores of the island as though he were loath to leave it, and as though he might still at some bend of a bay or beyond some verdant headland come upon the mines and jewels that he longed for. The mountain that he passed soon after starting he called Monte Christi, which name it bears to this day; and he saw many other mountains and capes and bays, to all of which he gave names. And it was a fortunate chance which led him thus to stand along the coast of the island; for on January 6 the sailor who was at the masthead, looking into the clear water for shoals and rocks, reported that he saw the caravel *Pinta* right ahead. When she came up with him, as they were in very shallow water, not suitable for anchorage, Columbus returned to the bay of Monte Christi to anchor there. Presently Martin Alonso Pinzon came on board to report himself—a somewhat crestfallen Martin, very likely, for he had failed to find the gold the hope of which had led him to break away on his own account. But the Martin Alonsos of this world, however sorry their position may be, have generally some kind of justification for it. It must have been a trying moment for Martin Alonso as his boat from the *Pinta* drew near the *Niña*, and he saw the stalwart, commanding figure of the white-haired Admiral walking the poop. He knew very well that, according to the law and custom of the sea, Columbus had the right to deal summarily with him and his men as deserters from duty; but Martin puts on a bold face as, with justification in his heart and (as likely as not) an ingratiating smile upon his face, he comes up over the side. Perhaps, being in some ways a cleverer man than Christopher, he knew the Admiral's weak points; knew that he was kind-hearted, and would remember those days of preparation at Palos when Martin Alonso had been his principal stay and help. Martin's story was that he had been separated from the Admiral against his will, that the crew

insisted upon it, and that in any case they had only meant to go and find some gold and bring it back to the Admiral. Columbus did not believe him for a moment, but either his wisdom or his weakness prevented him from saying so. He reproached Martin Alonso for acting with pride and covetousness "that night when he went away and left him"; and Columbus could not think "from whence had come the haughty actions and dishonesty Martin had shown towards him on that voyage." Martin had done a good trade and had got a certain amount of gold; and no doubt he knew well in what direction to turn the conversation when it was becoming unpleasant to himself. He told Columbus of an island to the south of Juana[1] called Yamaye,[2] where pieces of gold were taken from the mines as large as kernels of wheat, and of another island towards the east which was inhabited only by women.

The unpleasantness was passed over as soon as possible, although the Admiral felt that the sooner he got home the better, for he was now mastered by jealousy of the Pinzon brothers and their following from Palos. He therefore had the *Pinta* beached and recaulked, and took in wood and water, and continued his voyage on Tuesday, January 8. He says that "this night in the name of our Lord he will start on his journey without delaying himself further for any matter, since he had found what he had sought, and he did not wish to have more trouble with that Martin Alonso until their Highnesses learned the news of the voyage and what he had done." After that it will be another matter, and his turn will come; for then, he says, "I will not suffer the bad deeds of persons without virtue, who, with little respect, presume to carry out their own wills in opposition to those who did them honour." Indeed, for several days the name of "that Martin Alonso" takes the place of gold in Columbus's Journal. There were all kinds of gossip about the ill deeds of Martin Alonso, who had taken four Indian men and two young girls by force; the Admiral releasing them immediately and sending them back to their homes. Martin Alonso, moreover, had made a rule that half the gold that was found was to be kept by himself; and he tried to get all the people of his ship to swear that he had been trading for only six days, but "his wickedness was so public that he could not hide it." It was a good thing that Columbus had his Journal to talk to, for he worked off a deal of bitterness in it. On Sunday, January 13, when he had sent a boat ashore to collect some

[1] Cuba. [2] Jamaica.

"*ajes*," or potatoes, a party of natives with their faces painted and with the plumes of parrots in their hair came and attacked the party from the boat; but on getting a slash or two with a cutlass they took to flight and escaped from the anger of the Spaniards. Columbus thought that they were cannibals or *caribs*, and would like to have taken some of them, but they did not come back, although afterwards he collected four youths who came out to the caravel with cotton and arrows.

Columbus was very curious about the island of *Matinino*,[1] which was the one said to be inhabited only by women, and he wished very much to go there; but the caravels were leaking badly, the crews were complaining, and he was reluctantly compelled to shape his course for Spain. He sailed to the north-east, being anxious apparently to get into the region of westerly winds, which he correctly guessed would be found to the north of the course he had sailed on his outward voyage. By the 17th of January he was in the vicinity of the Sargasso Sea again, which this time had no terrors for him. From his Journal the word "gold" suddenly disappears; the Viceroy and Governor-General steps off the stage; and in his place appears the sea captain, watching the frigate birds and pelicans, noting the golden gulf-weed in the sea, and smelling the breezes, that are once more as sweet as the breezes of Seville in May. He had a good deal of trouble with his dead-reckoning at this time, owing to the changing winds and currents; but he made alway from fifty to seventy miles a day in a direction between north by-east and north-north-east. The *Pinta* was not sailing well, and he often had to wait for her to come up with him; and he reflected in his Journal that if Martin Alonso Pinzon had taken as much pains to provide himself with a good mast in the Indies as he had to separate himself from the Admiral, the *Pinta* would have sailed better.

And so he went on for several days, with the wind veering always south and south-west, and pointing pretty steadily to the north-east. On February 4 he changed his course, and went as near due east as he could. They now began to find themselves in considerable doubt as to their position. The Admiral said he was seventy-five leagues to the south of Flores; Vincenti Pinzon and the pilots thought that they had passed the Azores and were in the neighbourhood of Madeira. In other words, there was a difference of 600 miles between their estimates; and the Admiral remarks that "the grace of God per-

[1] Martinique.

mitting, as soon as land is seen, it will be known who has calculated the surest."

A great quantity of birds that began to fly about the ship made him think that they were near land; but they turned out to be the harbingers of a storm. On Tuesday, February 12, the sea and wind began to rise, and it continued to blow harder throughout that night and the next day. The wind being aft he went under bare poles most of the night, and when day came hoisted a little sail; but the sea was terrible, and if he had not been so sure of the staunch little *Niña* he would have felt himself in danger of being lost. The next day the sea, instead of going down, increased in roughness; there was a heavy cross sea which kept breaking right over the ship, and it became necessary to make a little sail in order to run before the wind, and to prevent the vessel falling back into the trough of the seas. All through Thursday he ran thus under the half-hoisted staysail; and he could see the *Pinta* running also before the wind, although since she presented more surface, and was able to carry a little more sail than the *Niña*, she was soon lost to sight. The Admiral showed lights through the night, and this time there was no lack of response from Martin Alonso; and for some part of that dark and stormy night these two humanly freighted scraps of wood and cordage staggered through the gale showing lights to each other; until at last the light from the *Pinta* disappeared. When morning came she was no longer to be seen; and the wind and the sea had if anything increased. The *Niña* was now in the greatest danger. Any one wave of the heavy cross sea, if it had broken fairly across her, would have sunk her; and she went swinging and staggering down into the great valleys and up into the hills, the steersman's heart in his mouth, and the whole crew in an extremity of fear. Columbus, who generally relied upon his seamanship, here invoked external aid, and began to offer bargains to the Almighty. He ordered that lots should be cast, and that he upon whom the lot fell should make a vow to go on pilgrimage to Santa Maria de Guadaloupe carrying a white candle of five pounds weight. Some dried peas were brought, one for every member of the crew, and on one of them a cross was marked with a knife; the peas were well shaken and were put into a cap. The first to draw was the Admiral; he drew the marked pea, and he made the vow. Lots were again drawn, this time for a greater pilgrimage, to Santa Maria de Loretto in Ancona; and the lot fell on a seaman named Pedro de Villa, the expenses of whose

pilgrimage Columbus promised to pay. Again lots were drawn for a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santa Clara of Moguer, the pilgrim to watch and pray for one night there; and again the lot fell on Columbus. In addition to these, every one, since they took themselves for lost, made some special and private vow or bargain with God; and finally they all made a vow together that at the first land they reached they would go in procession to pray at an altar of Our Lady.

The scene thus conjured up is one peculiar to the time and condition of these people, and is eloquent and pathetic enough: the little ship staggering and bounding along before the wind, and the frightened crew, who had gone through so many other dangers, huddled together under the forecastle, drawing peas out of a cap, crossing themselves, making vows upon their knees, and seeking to hire the protection of the Virgin by their offers of candles and pilgrimages. Poor Christopher, standing in his drenched oilskins and clinging to a piece of rigging, had his own searching of heart and examining of conscience. He was aware of the feverish anxiety and impatience that he felt, now that he had been successful in discovering a New World, to bring home the news and fruits of it; his desire to prove true what he had promised was so great that, in his own graphic phrase, "it seemed to him that every gnat could disturb and impede it"; and he attributed this anxiety to his lack of faith in God. He comforted himself, like Robinson Crusoe in a similar extremity, by considering on the other hand what favours God had shown him, and by remembering that it was to the glory of God that the fruits of his discovery were to be dedicated. But in the meantime here he was in a ship insufficiently ballasted (for she was now practically empty of provisions, and they had found it necessary to fill the wine and water casks with salt water in order to trim her) and flying before a tempest such as he had never experienced in his life. As a last resource, and in order to give his wonderful news a chance of reaching Spain in case the ship were lost, he went into his cabin and somehow or other managed to write on a piece of parchment a brief account of his discoveries, begging any one who might find it to carry it to the Spanish Sovereigns. He tied up the parchment in a waxed cloth, and put it into a large barrel without any one seeing him, and then ordered the barrel to be thrown into the sea, which the crew took to be some pious act of sacrifice or devotion. Then he went back on deck and watched the last of the daylight going and the green seas swelling and thundering

about his little ship, and thought anxiously of his two little boys at school in Cordova, and wondered what would become of them if he were lost.

The next morning the wind had changed a little, though it was still very high; but he was able to hoist up the bonnet or topsail, and presently the sea began to go down a little. When the sun rose they saw land to the east-north-east. Some of them thought it was Madeira, others the rock of Cintra in Portugal; the pilots said it was the coast of Spain, the Admiral thought it was the Azores; but at any rate it was land of some kind. The sun was shining upon it and upon the tumbling sea; and although the waves were still raging mast-high and the wind still blowing a hard gale, the miserable crew were able to hope that, having lived through the night, they could live through the day also.

They had to beat about to make the land, which was now ahead of them, now on the beam, and now astern; and although they had first sighted it at sunrise on Friday morning, it was early on Monday morning, February 18, before Columbus was able to cast anchor off the northern coast of an island which he discovered to be the island of Santa Maria in the Azores. On this day Columbus found time to write a letter to Luis de Santangel, the royal Treasurer, giving a full account of his voyage and discoveries; which letter he kept and despatched on the 4th of March, after he had arrived in Lisbon. Since it contained a postscript written at the last moment, we shall read it at that stage of our narrative. The inhabitants of Santa Maria received the voyagers with astonishment, for they believed that nothing could have lived through the tempest that had been raging for the last fortnight. They were greatly excited by the story of the discoveries; and the Admiral, who had now quite recovered command of himself, was able to pride himself on the truth of his dead-reckoning, which had proved to be so much more accurate than that of the pilots.

On the Tuesday evening three men hailed them from the shore, and when they were brought off to the ship delivered a message from the Portuguese Governor of the island, Juan de Castaneda, to the effect that he knew the Admiral very well, and that he was delighted to hear of his wonderful voyage. The next morning Columbus, remembering the vow that had been made in the storm, sent half the crew ashore in their shirts

to a little hermitage, which was on the other side of a
short distance away, and asked the Portuguese messe
send a priest to say Mass for them. While the members
crew were at their prayers, however, they received a rud
prise. They were suddenly attacked by the islanders, wh
come up on horses under the command of the treac
Governor, and taken prisoners. Columbus waited unsus
for the boat to come back with them, in order tha
other half of the crew could go and perform

When the boat did not come back he bega
accident must have happened to it, and gett
set sail for the point beyond which the hern
No sooner had he rounded the point than he saw
men, who dismounted, launched the boat which
on the beach, and began to row out, evidently with
of attacking the Admiral. When they came up to the
man in command of them rose and asked Columbus
him of personal safety; which assurance was wonderingly given
and the Admiral inquired how it was that none of his own people were in the boat? Columbus suspected treachery, and tried to meet it with treachery also, endeavouring with smooth words to get the captain to come on board so that he could seize him as a hostage. But as the Portuguese would not come on board, Columbus told them that they were acting very unwisely in affronting his people; that in the land of the Sovereigns of Castile the Portuguese were treated with great honour and security; that he held letters of recommendation from the Sovereigns addressed to every ruler in the world, and added that he was their Admiral of the Ocean Seas and Viceroy of the Indies, and could show the Portuguese his commission to that effect; and finally, that if his people were not returned to him, he would immediately make sail for Spain with the crew that was left to him and report this insult to the Spanish Sovereigns. To all of which the Portuguese captain replied that he did not know any Sovereigns of Castile; that neither they nor their letters were of any account in that island; that they were not afraid of Columbus; and that they would have him know that he had Portugal to deal with—edging away in the boat at the same time to a convenient distance from the caravel. When he thought he was out of gunshot he shouted to Columbus, ordering him to take his caravel back to the harbour, by command of the Governor of the island. Columbus answered by calling his crew to witness that he pledged his word not to descend

[redacted] leave his caravel until he had taken a hundred Portu[redacted]o Castile, and had depopulated all their islands. After [redacted] explosion of words he returned to the harbour and [redacted]red there, " as the weather and wind were very unfavour[redacted]for anything else."

[redacted] was, however, in a very bad anchorage, with a rocky [redacted]hich presently fouled his anchors ; and on the Wednes[redacted] to make sail towards the island of San Miguel in [redacted]nd a better anchorage. But the wind and sea [redacted]ery badly, he was obliged to beat about all [redacted]pleasant situation, with only three sailors who [redacted]on, and a rabble of gaol-birds and longshore[redacted] little use in a tempest but to draw lots and vow [redacted]nding himself unable to make the island of San [redacted]ecided to go back to Santa Maria and make an [redacted]o recover his boat and his crew and the anchor and [redacted]e had lost there.

In his Journal for this day, and amid all his anxieties, he found time to note down one of his curious visionary cosmographical reflections. This return to a region of storms and heavy seas reminded him of the long months he had spent in the balmy weather and calm waters of his discovery ; in which facts he found a confirmation of the theological idea that the Eden, or Paradise, of earth was " at the end of the Orient, because it is a most temperate place. So that these lands which he had now discovered are at the end of the Orient." Reflections such as these, which abound in his writings, ought in themselves to be a sufficient condemnation of those who have endeavoured to prove that Columbus was a man of profound cosmographical learning and of a scientific mind. A man who would believe that he had discovered the Orient because in the place where he had been he had found calm weather, and because the theologians said that the Garden of Eden must be in the Orient since it is a temperate place, would believe anything.

Late on Thursday night, when he anchored again in the harbour of San Lorenzo at Santa Maria, a man hailed them from the rocks, and asked them not to go away. Presently a boat containing five sailors, two priests, and a notary put off from the beach ; and they asked for a guarantee of security in order that they might treat with the Admiral. They slept on board that night, and in the morning asked him to show them his authority from the Spanish Sovereigns, which the Admiral did, understanding that they had asked for this formality in order to save

their dignity. He showed them his general letter from the King and Queen of Spain, addressed to "Princes and Lords of High Degree"; and being satisfied with this, they went ashore and released the Admiral's people, from whom he learned that what had been done had been done by command of the King of Portugal, and that he had issued an order to the Governors of all the Portuguese islands that if Columbus landed there on his way home he was to be taken prisoner.

He sailed again on Sunday, February 24, encountering heavy winds and seas, which troubled him greatly with fears lest some disaster should happen at the eleventh hour to interfere with his triumph. On Sunday, March 3, the wind rose to the force of a hurricane, and, on a sudden gust of violent wind splitting all the sails, the unhappy crew gathered together again and drew more lots and made more vows. This time the pilgrimage was to be to the shrine of Santa Maria at Huelva, the pilgrim to go, as before, in his shirt; and the lot fell to the Admiral. The rest of them made a vow to fast on the next Saturday on bread and water; but as they all thought it extremely unlikely that by that time they would be in need of any bodily sustenance, the sacrifice could hardly have been a great one. They scudded along under bare poles and in a heavy cross sea all that night; but at dawn on Monday they saw land ahead of them, which Columbus recognised as the rock of Cintra at Lisbon; and at Lisbon sure enough they landed some time during the morning. As soon as they were inside the river the people came flocking down with stories of the gale and of all the wrecks that there had been on the coast. Columbus hurried away from the excited crowds to write a letter to the King of Portugal, asking him for a safe-conduct to Spain, and assuring him that he had come from the Indies, and not from any of the forbidden regions of Guinea.

The next day brought a visit from no less a person than Bartholomew Diaz. Columbus had probably met him before in 1486, when Diaz had been a distinguished man and Columbus a man not distinguished; but now things were changed. Diaz ordered Columbus to come on board his small vessel in order to go and report himself to the King's officers; but Columbus replied that he was the Admiral of the Sovereigns of Castile, "that he did not render such account to such persons," and that he declined to leave his ship. Diaz then ordered him to send

the captain of the *Niña*; but Columbus refused to send either the captain or any other person, and otherwise gave himself airs as the Admiral of the Ocean Seas. Diaz then moderated his requests, and merely asked Columbus to show him his letter of authority, which Columbus did; and then Diaz went away and brought back with him the captain of the Portuguese royal yacht, who came in great state on board the shabby little *Niña*, with kettle-drums and trumpets and pipes, and placed himself at the disposal of Columbus. It is a curious moment, this, in which the two great discoverers of their time, Diaz and Columbus, meet for an hour on the deck of a forty-ton caravel; a curious thing to consider that they who had performed such great feats of skill and bravery, one to discover the southernmost point of the Old World and the other to voyage across an uncharted ocean to the discovery of an entirely New World, could find nothing better to talk about than their respective ranks and glories, and found no more interesting subject of discussion than the exact amount of state and privilege which should be accorded to each.

During the day or two in which Columbus waited in the port crowds of people came down from Lisbon to see the little *Niña*, which was an object of much admiration and astonishment; to see the Indians also, at whom they greatly marvelled. It was probably at this time that the letter addressed to Luis de Santangel, containing the first official account of the voyage, was despatched.

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"Sir: As I am sure you will be pleased at the great victory which the Lord has given me in my voyage, I write this to inform you that in twenty[1] days I arrived in the Indies with the squadron which their majesties had placed under my command. There I discovered many islands, inhabited by a numerous population, and took possession of them for their Highnesses, with public ceremony and the royal flag displayed, without molestation.

"The first that I discovered I named San Salvador, in remembrance of that Almighty Power which had so miraculously

[1] *veinte*—a typographical mistake for xxxiii.

bestowed them. The Indians call it Guanahani. To the second I assigned the name of Santa Maria de la Conception; to the third that of Fernandina; to the fourth that of Isabella; to the fifth Juana; and so on, to every one a new name.

"When I arrived at Juana, I followed the coast to the westward, and found it so extensive that I considered it must be a continent and a province of Cathay. And as I found no towns or villages by the seaside, excepting some small settlements, with the people of which I could not communicate because they all ran away, I continued my course to the westward, thinking I should not fail to find some large towns and cities. After having coasted many leagues without finding any signs of them, and seeing that the coast took me to the northward, where I did not wish to go, as the winter was already set in, I considered it best to follow the coast to the south: and the wind being also scant, I determined to lose no more time, and therefore returned to a certain port, from whence I sent two messengers into the country to ascertain whether there was any king there or any large city.

"They travelled for three days, finding an infinite number of small settlements and an innumerable population, but nothing like a city: on which account they returned. I had tolerably well ascertained from some Indians whom I had taken that this land was only an island, so I followed the coast of it to the east 107 leagues, to its termination. And about eighteen leagues from this cape, to the east, there was another island, to which I shortly gave the name of Española. I went to it, and followed the north coast of it, as I had done that of Juana, for 178[1] long leagues due east.

"This island is very fertile, as well, indeed, as all the rest. It possesses numerous harbours, far superior to any I know in Europe, and what is remarkable, plenty of large inlets. The land is high, and contains many lofty ridges and some very high mountains, without comparison of the island of Centrefrey[2]; all of them very handsome and of different forms; all of them accessible and abounding in trees of a thousand kinds, high, and appearing as if they would reach the skies. And I am assured that the latter never lose their fresh foliage, as far as I can understand, for I saw them as fresh and flourishing as those of Spain in the month of May. Some were in blossom, some bearing fruit, and others in other states, according to their nature.

[1] Should be 188;

[2] Teneriffe;

"The nightingale and a thousand kinds of birds enlivened the woods with their song, in the month of November, wherever I went. There are seven or eight kinds of palms, of various elegant forms, besides various other trees, fruits, and herbs. The pines of this island are magnificent. It has also extensive plains, honey, and a great variety of birds and fruits. It has many metal mines, and a population innumerable.

"Española is a wonderful island, with mountains, groves, plains, and the country generally beautiful and rich for planting and sowing, for rearing sheep and cattle of all kinds, and ready for towns and cities. The harbours must be seen to be appreciated; rivers are plentiful and large and of excellent water; the greater part of them contain gold. There is a great difference between the trees, fruits, and herbs of this island and those of Juana. In this island [1] there are many spices, and large mines of gold and other metals.

"The people of this island and of all the others which I have discovered or heard of, both men and women, go naked as they were born, although some of the women wear leaves of herbs or a cotton covering made on purpose. They have no iron or steel, nor any weapons; not that they are not a well-disposed people and of fine stature, but they are timid to a degree. They have no other arms excepting spears made of cane, to which they fix at the end a sharp piece of wood, and then dare not use even these. Frequently I had occasion to send two or three of my men on shore to some settlement for information, where there would be multitudes of them; and as soon as they saw our people they would run away every soul, the father leaving his child; and this was not because any one had done them harm, for rather at every cape where I had landed and been able to communicate with them I have made them presents of cloth and many other things without receiving anything in return; but because they are so timid. Certainly, where they have confidence and forget their fears, they are so open-hearted and liberal with all they possess that it is scarcely to be believed without seeing it. If anything that they have is asked of them they never deny it; on the contrary, they will offer it. Their generosity is so great that they would give anything, whether it is costly or not, for anything of every kind that is offered them and be contented with it. I was obliged to prevent such worthless things being given them as pieces of broken basins, broken glass, and bits of shoe-latchets, although when they obtained them they

[1] Española.

esteemed them as if they had been the greatest of treasures. One of the seamen for a latchet received a piece of gold weighing two dollars and a half, and others, for other things of much less value, obtained more. Again, for new silver coin they would give everything they possessed, whether it was worth two or three doubloons or one or two balls of cotton. Even for pieces of broken pipe-tubes they would take them and give anything for them, until, when I thought it wrong, I prevented it. And I made them presents of thousands of things which I had, that I might win their esteem, and also that they might be made good Christians and be disposed to the service of Your Majesties and the whole Spanish nation, and help us to obtain the things which we require and of which there is abundance in their country.

"And these people appear to have neither religion nor idolatry, except that they believe that good and evil come from the skies; and they firmly believed that our ships and their crews, with myself, came from the skies, and with this persuasion, after having lost their fears, they always received us. And yet this does not proceed from ignorance, for they are very ingenious, and some of them navigate their seas in a wonderful manner and give good account of things, but because they never saw people dressed or ships like ours.

"And as soon as I arrived in the Indies, at the first island at which I touched, I captured some of them, that we might learn from them and obtain intelligence of what there was in those parts. And as soon as we understood each other they were of great service to us; but yet, from frequent conversation which I had with them, they still believe we came from the skies. These were the first to express that idea, and others ran from house to house, and to the neighbouring villages, crying out, "Come and see the people from the skies." And thus all of them, men and women, after satisfying themselves of their safety, came to us without reserve, great and small, bringing us something to eat and drink, and which they gave to us most affectionately.

"They have many canoes in those islands propelled by oars, some of them large and others small, and many of them with eight or ten paddles of a side, not very wide, but all of one trunk, and a boat cannot keep way with them by oars, for they are incredibly fast; and with these they navigate all the islands, which are innumerable, and obtain their articles of traffic.

I have seen some of these canoes with sixty or eighty men in them, and each with a paddle.

"Among the islands I did not find much diversity of formation in the people, nor in their customs, nor their language. They all understand each other, which is remarkable; and I trust Your Highnesses will determine on their being converted to our faith, for which they are very well disposed.

"I have already said that I went 107 leagues along the coast of Juana, from east to west. Thus, according to my track, it is larger than England and Scotland together, for, besides these 107 leagues, there were farther west two provinces to which I did not go, one of which is called Cibau, the people of which are born with tails; which provinces must be about fifty or sixty leagues long, according to what I can make out from the Indians I have with me, who know all the islands. The other island (Española) is larger in circuit than the whole of Spain, from the Straits of Gibraltar (the Columns) to Fuentarabia in Biscay, as I sailed 138 long leagues in a direct line from west to east. Once known it must be desired, and once seen one desires never to leave it; and which, being taken possession of for your Highnesses, and the people being at present in a condition lower than I can possibly describe, the Sovereigns of Castile may dispose of it in any manner they please in the most convenient places. In this Española, and in the best district, where are gold mines, and, on the other side, from thence to terra firma, as well as from thence to the Great Khan, where everything is on a splendid scale—I have taken possession of a large town, to which I gave the name of La Navidad, and have built a fort in it, in every respect complete. And I have left sufficient people in it to take care of it, with artillery and provisions for more than a year; also a boat and coxswain with the equipments, in complete friendship with the King of the islands, to that degree that he delighted to call me and look on me as his brother. And should they fall out with these people, neither he nor his subjects know anything of weapons, and go naked, as I have said, and they are the most timorous people in the world. The few people left there are sufficient to conquer the country, and the island would thus remain without danger to them, they keeping order among themselves.

"In all these islands it appeared to me the men are contented with one wife, but to their governor or king they allow twenty. The women seem to work more than the men. I have not been

able to discover whether they respect personal property, for it appeared to me things were common to all, especially in the particular of provisions. Hitherto I have not seen in any of these islands any monsters, as there were supposed to be; the people, on the contrary, are generally well formed, nor are they black like those of the Guinea, saving their hair, and they do not reside in places exposed to the sun's rays. It is true that the sun is most powerful there, and it is only twenty-six degrees from the equator. In this last winter those islands which were mountainous were cold, but they were accustomed to it, with good and plenty of spices and hot nutriment. Thus I have found monsters nor heard of any, except at an island which is the going to the Indies, and which is inhabited by a people considered in all the islands as ferocious, and who delight in human flesh. These people have many canoes, which scour the seas of India, and plunder all they can. They are not more deformed than the others, but they wear the hair long like women, and use bows and arrows of the same kind of cane, with a piece of hard wood instead of iron, of which they have little. They are fierce compared with the other people, who are in general but sad cowards; but I do not consider them in any other way superior to them. These are they who trade in women, who inhabit the first island met with in going from Spain to the Indies, in which there are no men whatever. They have no effeminate exercise, but bows and arrows, as before said, of cane, with which they arm themselves, and use shields of copper, of which they have plenty.

"There is another island, I am told, larger than Española, the natives of which have no hair. In this there is gold without limit, and of this and the others I have Indians with me to witness.

"In conclusion, referring only to what has been effected by this voyage, which was made with so much haste, Your Highnesses may see that I shall find as much gold as desired with the very little assistance afforded to me; there is as much spice and cotton as can be wished for, and also gum, which hitherto has only been found in Greece, in the island of Chios, and they may sell it as they please, and the mastich, as much as may be desired, and slaves, also, who will be idolators. And I believe that I have rhubarb, and cinnamon, and a thousand other things I shall find, which will be discovered by those whom I have left behind, for I did not stop at any cape when the wind enabled me to navigate, except at the town of Navidad, where I

was very safe and well taken care of. And in truth much more I should have done if the ships had served me as might have been expected. This is certain, that the Eternal God our Lord gives all things to those who obey Him, and the victory when it seems impossible, and this, evidently, is an instanc of it, for although people have talked of these lands, was conjecture unless proved by seeing them, for the gre part listened and judged more by hearsay than by anyth else.

"Since, then, our Redeemer has given this victory t illustrious King and Queen and celebrated their reigns b a great thing, all Christendom should rejoice and mak festivals, and give solemn thanks to the Blessed Trin solemn praises for the exaltation of so much people to faith; and next for the temporal blessings which not but they will enjoy in becoming Christians, and whic shortly be accomplished.

"Written in the caravel off Santa Maria, on the of February, ninety-three."

The following postscript was added to the letter before it was despatched :—

"After writing the above, being in the Castilian Sea (off the coast of Castile), I experienced so severe a wind from south and south-east that I have been obliged to run to-day into this port of Lisbon, and only by a miracle got safely in, from whenc I intended to write to Your Highnesses. In all parts of th Indies I have found the weather like that of May, where I wer in ninety-three days, and returned in seventy-eight, savin these thirteen days of bad weather that I have been detained beating about in this sea. Every seaman here says that never was so severe a winter, nor such loss of ships."

On the Friday a messenger came from the King in the person of Don Martin de Noronha, a relative of Columbus by marriage, and one who had perhaps looked down upon him in the days when he attended the convent chapel at Lisbon, but who was now the bearer of a royal invitation and in the position of a mere envoy. Columbus repaired to Paraiso, where the King was, and where he was received with great honour. King John might

well have been excused if he had felt some mortification at this glorious and successful termination of a project which had been offered to him and which he had rejected; but he evidently behaved with dignity and a good grace, and did everything that he could to help Columbus. It was extremely unlikely that he had anything to do with the insult offered to Columbus at the Azores, for though he was bitterly disappointed that the glory of this discovery belonged to Spain and not to Portugal, he was too much of a man to show it in this petty and revengeful manner. He offered to convey Columbus by land into Spain; but the Admiral, with a fine dramatic sense, preferred to arrive by sea on board of all that was left of the fleet with which he had sailed. He sailed for Seville on Wednesday, March 13; but during the next day, when he was off Cape Saint Vincent, he evidently changed his mind and decided to make for Palos. Sunrise on Friday saw him off the bar of Saltes, with the white walls of La Rabida shining on the promontory among the dark fir-trees. During the hours in which he stood off and on waiting for the tide he was able to recognise again all the old landmarks and the scenes which had been so familiar to him in those busy days of preparation nine months before; and at mid-day he sailed in with the flood tide and dropped his anchor again in the mud of the river by Palos.

The caravel had been sighted some time before, probably when she was standing off the bar waiting for the tide; she was flying the Admiral's flag and there was no mistaking her identity; and we can imagine the news spreading throughout the town of Palos, and reaching Huelva, and one by one the bells beginning to ring, and the places of business to be closed, and the people to come pouring out into the streets to be ready to greet their friends. Some, more impatient than the others, would sail out in fishing-boats to get the first news; and I should be surprised to know that a boat did not put off from the little pier beneath La Rabida, to row round the point and out to where the *Niña* was lying-to beyond the Manto Bank. When the flood began to make over the bar and to cover the long sandbank that stretches from the island of Saltes, the *Niña* came gliding in, greeted by every joyful sound and signal that the inhabitants of the two seaports could make. Every one hurried down to Palos as the caravel rounded the Convent Point. Hernandez, Marchena, and good old Juan Perez were all there, we may be sure. Such excitements, such triumphs as the bronzed, white-bearded Admiral steps ashore at last, and is seized by dozens of eager

hands! Such excitements as all the wives and inamoratas of the Rodrigos and Juans and Franciscos rush to meet the swarthy voyagers and cover them with embraces; such disappointments also, when it is realised that some two score of the company are still on a sun-baked island infinitely far over the western horizon! Tears of joy and grief, shouts and feastings, firing of guns and flying of flags, processions and receptions—with these the deathless day is filled; and the little *Niña*, her purpose staunchly fulfilled, swings deserted on the turning tide, the ripples of her native Tinto making a familiar music under her bowsprit.

And in the evening, with the last of the flood, another ship comes gliding round the point and up the estuary. The inhabitants of Palos have all left the shore and are absorbed in the business of welcoming the great man; and there is no one left to notice or welcome the *Pinta*. For it is she that, by a strange coincidence, and after many dangers and distresses endured since she had parted company from the *Niña* in the storm, now has made her native port on the very same day as the *Niña*. Our old friend Martin Alonso Pinzon is on board, all the brave enterprise gone out of him, and anxious only to get home. He had made the port of Bayona on the north-west coast of Spain, and had sent from there a letter to the Sovereigns announcing his arrival, and had, it is believed, received an answer summoning him to Court. But he was ill and unlucky; he was able only to reach his own house, where he took to his bed and, in a few days, died.

It has been the custom with most historians to take all the jealous and querulous entries in Columbus's Journal as representing the true facts, and to assign to Pinzon a very doubtful rôle in the drama of the great discovery. But the cold and patient hand of research has set aside these complaints one after the other and, with a tardy justice, revealed the true importance of Pinzon's part in the enterprise. It is chiefly to M. Henry Vignaud that we owe our truer knowledge of this, as of so many other of the obscure and doubtful events in the Columbian story; and no one who has read his clear, full, and exact examination of the facts in his "Rôle de M. A. Pinzon"[1] can remain in any doubt that, far from being (as we had hitherto supposed) a treacherous and mischievous man,

[1] "Histoire Critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb," vol. ii., p. 195.

Pinzon deserves high honour, first for his encouragement of Columbus, then for his practical help in fitting out the expedition, and finally for his share in the achievement of a service of which he did not live to claim either credit or reward.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUR OF TRIUMPH

FROM the moment when Columbus set foot on Spanish soil in the spring of 1493 he was surrounded by a fame and glory which, although they were transient, were of a splendour such as few other men can ever have experien He had not merely discovered a country, he had discover world. He had not merely made a profitable expedition; he brought the promise of untold wealth to the kingdom of Spa He had not merely made himself the master of savage tribe he had conquered the supernatural, and overcome for ever th powers of darkness that had been thought to brood over t vast Atlantic. He had sailed away in obscurity, he had retur in fame; he had departed under a cloud of scepticism a ridicule, he had come again in power and glory. He had sai from Palos as a seeker after hidden wealth, hidden knowledg he returned as teacher, discoverer, benefactor. The whole Spain rang with his fame, and the echoes of it spread to Portug France, England, Germany, and Italy; and it reached the e of his own family, who had now left the Vico Dritto di Pontice in Genoa and were living at Savona.

His life ashore in the first weeks following his return wa succession of triumphs and ceremonials. His first care on lan had been to go with the whole of his crew to the church of S George, where a *Te Deum* was sung in honour of his return; a afterwards to perform those vows that he had made at sea the hour of danger. There was a certain amount of business transact at Palos in connection with the paying of the ships' crews, writing of reports to the Sovereigns, and so forth; and it is likely that he stayed with his friends at the monastery of La Rabida while this was being done. The Court was at Barcelona; and it was probably only a sense of his own great dignity and importance that prevented Christopher from setting off on the long journey immediately. But he who had made so many pilgrimages to Court as a suitor could revel in a position that made it possible for him to hang back, and to be pressed and

invited; and so when his business at Palos was finished he sent a messenger with his letters and reports to Barcelona, and himself, with his crew and his Indians and all his trophies, departed for Seville, where he arrived on Palm Sunday.

His entrance into that city was only a foretaste of the glory in which he was to move across the whole of Spain. He was met at the gates of the city by a squadron of cavalry commanded by an envoy sent by Queen Isabella; and a procession was formed of members of the crew carrying parrots, alive and stuffed, fruits, vegetables, and various other products of the New World. In a prominent place came the Indians, or rather four of them, for one had died on the day they entered Palos and three were too ill to leave that town; but the ones that took part in the procession got all the more attention and admiration. The streets of Seville were crowded; crowded also were the windows, balconies, and roofs. The Admiral was entertained at the house of the Count of Cifuentes, where his little museum of dead and live curiosities was also accommodated, and where certain favoured visitors were admitted to view it. His two sons, Diego and Ferdinand, were sent from Cordova to join him; and perhaps he found time to visit Beatriz, although there is no record of his having been to Cordova or of her having come to Seville.

Meanwhile his letters and messengers to the King and Queen had produced their due effect. The almost incredible had come to pass, and they saw themselves the monarchs not merely of Spain, but of a new empire that might be as vast as Europe and Africa together. On the 30th of March they despatched a special messenger with a letter to Columbus, whose eyes must have sparkled and heart expanded when he read the superscription: "From the King and Queen to Don Christoval Colon, their Admiral of the Ocean Seas and Viceroy and Governor of the Islands discovered in the Indies." No lack of titles and dignities now! Their Majesties express a profound sense of his ability and distinction, of the greatness of his services to them, to the Church, and to God Himself. They hope that he will lose no time, but repair to Barcelona immediately, so that they can have the pleasure of hearing from his own lips an account of his wonderful expedition, and of discussing with him the preparations that must immediately be set on foot to fit out a new one. On receiving this letter Christopher immedi-

ately drew up a list of what he thought necessary for the new expedition and, collecting all his retinue and his museum of specimens, started by road for Barcelona.

Every one in Spain had by this time heard more or less exaggerated accounts of the discoveries, and the excitement in the towns and villages through which he passed was extreme. Wherever he went he was greeted and feasted like a king returning from victorious wars; the people lined the streets of the towns and villages, and hung out banners, and gazed their fill at the Indians and at the strange sunburned faces of the crew. At Barcelona, where they arrived towards the end of April, the climax of these glittering dignities was reached. When the King and Queen heard that Columbus was approaching the town they had their throne prepared under a magnificent pavilion, and in the hot sunshine of that April day they sat and waited the coming of the great man. A glittering troop of cavalry had been sent out to meet him, and at the gates of the town a procession was formed similar to that at Seville. He had now six natives with him, who occupied an important place in the procession; sailors also, who carried baskets of fruit and vegetables from Española, with stuffed birds and animals, and a monstrous lizard held aloft on a stick. The Indians were duly decked out in all their paint and feathers; but if they were a wonder and marvel to the people of Spain, what must Spain have been to them with its great buildings and cities, its carriages and horses, its glittering dresses and armours, its splendour and luxury! We have no record of what the Indians thought, only of what the crowd thought who gaped upon them and upon the gaudy parrots that screeched and fluttered also in the procession. Columbus came riding on horseback, as befitted a great Admiral and Viceroy, surrounded by his pilots and principal officers; and followed by men bearing golden belts, golden masks, nuggets of gold and dust of gold, and preceded by heralds, pursuivants, and mace-bearers.

What a return for the man who three years before had been pointed at and laughed to scorn in this same brilliant society! The crowds pressed so closely that the procession could hardly get through the streets; the whole population was there to witness it; and the windows and balconies and roofs of the houses, as well as the streets themselves, were thronged with a gaily dressed and wildly excited crowd. At length the procession reaches the presence of the King and Queen; and, crowning and unprecedented honour as the Admiral comes before them

Ferdinand and Isabella rise to greet him. Under their own royal canopy a seat is waiting for him; and when he has made his ceremonial greeting he is invited to sit in their presence and give an account of his voyage.

He is fully equal to the situation; settles down to do himself and his subject justice; begins, we may be sure, with a preamble about the providence of God and its wisdom and consistency in preserving the narrator and preparing his life for this great deed; putting in a deal of scientific talk which had in truth nothing to do with the event, but was always applied to it in Columbus's writings from this date onwards; and going on to describe the voyage, the sea of weeds, the landfall, his intercourse with the natives, their aptitude for labour and Christianity, and the hopes he has of their early conversion to the Catholic Church. And then follows a long description of the wonderful climate, "like May in Andalusia," the noble rivers and gorgeous scenery, the trees and fruits and flowers and singing birds; the spices and the cotton; and chief of all, the vast stores of gold and pearls of which the Admiral had brought home specimens. At various stages in his narrative he produces illustrations; now a root of rhubarb or allspice; now a raw nugget of gold; now a piece of gold laboured into a mask or belt; now a native decorated with the barbaric ornaments that were the fashion in Española. These things, says Columbus, are mere first-fruits of the harvest that is to come; the things which he, like the dove that had flown across the sea from the Ark and brought back an olive leaf in its mouth, has brought back across the stormy seas to that Ark of civilisation from which he had flown forth. It was to Columbus an opportunity of stretching his visionary wings and creating with pompous words and images a great halo round himself of dignity and wonder and divine distinction; an opportunity such as he loved, and such as he never failed to make use of.

The Sovereigns were delighted and profoundly impressed. Columbus wound up his address with an eloquent peroration concerning the glory to Christendom of these new discoveries; and there followed an impressive silence, during which the Sovereigns sank on their knees and raised hands and tearful eyes to heaven, an example in which they were followed by the whole of the assembly; and an appropriate gesture enough, seeing what was to come of it all. The choir of the Chapel Royal sang a solemn *Te Deum* on the spot; and the Sovereigns and nobles, bishops, archbishops, grandees, hidalgos, chamberlains,

treasurers, chancellors, and other courtiers, being exhausted by these emotions, retired to dinner. –

During his stay at Barcelona Columbus was the guest of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, and moved thus in an atmosphere of combined temporal and spiritual dignity such as his soul loved. Very agreeable indeed to him was the honour shown to him at this time. Deep down in his heart there was a secret nerve of pride and vanity which throughout his life hitherto had been continually mortified and wounded; but he was able now to indulge his appetite for outward pomp and honour as much as he pleased. When King Ferdinand went out to ride, Columbus would be seen riding on one side of him, the young Prince John riding on the other side; and everywhere, when he moved among the respectful and admiring throng, his grave face was seen to be wreathed in complacent smiles. His hair, which had turned white soon after he was thirty, gave him a dignified and almost venerable appearance, although he was only in his forty-third year, and combined with his handsome and commanding presence to excite immense enthusiasm among the Spaniards. They forgot for the moment what they had formerly remembered and were to remember again—that he was a foreigner, an Italian, a man of no family and of poor origin. They saw in him the figure-head of a new empire and a new glory, an emblem of power and riches, of the dominion which their proud souls loved; and so there beamed upon him the brief, fickle sunshine of their smiles and favour, which he in his delusion regarded as an earnest of their permanent honour and esteem.

It is almost always thus with a man not born to such dignities, and who comes by them through his own efforts and labours. No one would grudge him the short-lived happiness of these summer weeks; but although he believed himself to be as happy as a man can be, he appears to quietly contemplating eyes less happy and fortunate than when he stood alone on the deck of his ship, surrounded by an untrustworthy crew, prevailing by his own unaided efforts over the difficulties and dangers with which he was surrounded. Court functions and processions and the companionship of kings and cardinals, are indeed not suitable reward for the kind of work that he did. Courtly dignities are suited to courtly services; but they are no suitable crown for rough labour and hardship at sea, or for the fulfilment

of a man's self by lights within him; no suitable crown for any solitary labour whatsoever, which must always be its own and only reward.

It is to this period of splendour that the story of the egg, which is to some people the only familiar incident in Columbian biography, is attributed. The story is that at a banquet given by the Cardinal-Archbishop the conversation ran, as it always did in those days when he was present, on the subject of the Admiral's discoveries; and that one of the guests remarked that it was all very well for Columbus to have done what he did, but that in a country like Spain, where there were so many men learned in science and cosmography, and many able mariners besides, some one else would certainly have been found who would have done the same thing. Whereupon Columbus, calling for an egg, laid a wager that no one of the company but himself could make it stand on its end without support. The egg was brought and passed round, and every one tried to make it stand on end, but without success. When it came to Columbus he cracked the shell at one end, making a flat surface on which the egg stood upright; thus demonstrating that a thing might be wonderful, not because it was difficult or impossible, but merely because no one had ever thought of doing it before. A sufficiently inane story, and by no means certainly true; but there is enough character in this little feat, ponderous, deliberate, pompous, ostentatious, and at bottom a trick and deceitful quibble, to make it accord with the grandiloquent public manner of Columbus, and to make it easily believable of one who chose to show himself in his speech and writings so much more meanly and pretentiously than he showed himself in the true acts and business of his life.

But pomp and parade were not the only occupation of these Barcelona days. There were long consultations with Ferdinand and Isabella about the colonisation of the new lands; there were intrigues, and parrying of intrigues, between the Spanish and Portuguese Courts on the subject of the discoveries and of the representative right of the two nations to be the religious saviours of the New World. The Pope, to whose hands the heathen were entrusted by God to be handed for an inheritance to the highest and most religious bidder,

had at that time innocently divided them into two portions, to wit: heathen to the south of Spain and Portugal, and heathen to the west of those places. By the Bull of 1438, granted by Pope Martin V., the heathen to the west had been given to the Spanish, and the heathen to the south to the Portuguese, and the two Crowns had in 1479 come to a working agreement. Now, however, the existence of more heathen to the west of the Azores introduced a new complication, and Ferdinand sent a message to Pope Alexander VI. praying for a confirmation of the Spanish title to the new discoveries.

This Pope, who was a native of Aragon and had been a subject of Ferdinand, was a stolid, perverse, and stubborn being; so much is advertised in his low forehead, impudent prominent nose, thick sensual lips, and stout bull neck. T[illegible] Pope considers the matter; considers, by such lights as he h[illegible] to whom he shall entrust the souls of these new heathen considers which country, Spain or Portugal, is most likely [illegible] hold and use the same for the increase of the Christian faith i[illegible] general, the furtherance of the Holy Catholic Church in specia[illegible] and the aggrandisement of Popes in particular; and shrewdl[illegible] decides that the country in which the Inquisition can flourish[illegible] is the country to whom the heathen souls should be entrusted[illegible] He therefore issues a Bull, dated May 3, 1493, granting t[illegible] the Spanish the possession of all lands, not occupied by Christian powers, that lie west of a meridian drawn one hundred leagues to the westward of the Azores, and to the Portuguese possession of all similar lands lying to the eastward of that line. He sleeps upon this Bull, and has inspiration; and on the morrow, May 4 issues another Bull, drawing a line from the arctic to the antarctic pole, and granting to Spain all heathen inheritanc[illegible] to the westward of the same. The Pope, having signed this Bul[illegible] considers it further—assisted, no doubt, by the Portugues[illegible] Ambassador at the Vatican, to whom it has been show[illegible] realises that in the wording of the Bull an injustice has b[illegible] done to Portugal, since Spain is allowed to fix very much [illegible] her own convenience the point at which the line drawn fr[illegible] pole to pole shall cut the equator; and also because, althou[illegible] Spain is given all the lands in existence within her territory; Portugal is only given the lands which she may actually have occupied. Even the legal mind of the Pope, although much drowsed and blunted by brutish excesses, discerns faultiness in this document; and consequently on the same day issues a third Bull, in which the injustice to Portugal is redressed.

Nothing so easy, thinks the Pope, as to issue Bulls; if you make a mistake in one Bull, issue another; and, having issued three Bulls in twenty-four hours, he desists for the present, having divided the earthly globe.

Thus easy it is for a Pope to draw lines from pole to pole, and across the deep of the sea. Yet the poles sleep still in their icy virginal sanctity, and the blue waves through which that papal line passes shift and shimmer and roll in their free salt loneliness, unaffected by his demarcation; the heathen also, it appears, since that distant day, have had something to say to their disposition. If he had slept upon it another night, dull Pope, it might have occurred to him that west and east might meet on a meridian situated elsewhere on the globe than one hundred miles west of the Azores; and that the Portuguese, who for the moment had nothing heathen except Africa left to them, might according to his demarcation strike a still richer vein of heathendom than that granted to Spain. But the holy Pontiff, bull neck, low forehead, impudent prominent nose, and sensual lips notwithstanding, is exhausted by his cosmographical efforts, and he lets it rest at that. Later, when Spain discovers that her privileges have been abated, he will have to issue another Bull; but not to-day. Sufficient unto the day are the Bulls thereof. For the moment King proposes and Pope disposes; but the matter lies ultimately in the hands of the two eternal protagonists, man and God.

In the meantime here are six heathen alive and well, or at any rate well enough to support, willy-nilly, the rite of holy baptism. They must have been sufficiently dazed and bewildered by all that had happened to them since they were taken on board the Admiral's ship; and God alone knows what they thought of it all, or whether they thought anything more than the parrots that screamed and fluttered and winked circular eyes in the procession with them. Doubtless they were willing enough; and indeed, after all they had come through, a little cold water could not do them any harm. So baptised they were in Barcelona; pompously baptised with infinite state and ceremony, the King and Queen and Prince Juan officiating as sponsors. Queen Isabella, after the manner of queens, took a kindly feminine interest in these heathen, and in their brethren across the sea. She had seen a good deal of conquest, and knew her Spaniard pretty intimately; and doubtless her maternal

heart had some misgivings about the ultimate happiness of the gentle, handsome creatures who lived in the sunshine in that distant place. She made their souls her especial care, and honestly believed that by providing for their spiritual conversion she was doing them the greatest service in her power. She provided from her own private chapel vestments and altar furniture for the mission church at Española; she had the six exiles in Barcelona instructed under her eye; and she gave Columbus special orders to inflict severe punishments on any one who should offer the natives violence or injustice of any kind. It must be remembered to her credit that in after days, when slavery and an intolerable bloody and brutish oppression had turned the paradise of Española into a shambles, she fought almost single-handed, and with an ethical sense far in advance of her day, against the system of slavery practised in Spain upon the inhabitants of the New World.

The dignities that had been provisionally granted to Columbus before his departure on the first voyage were now elaborately confirmed; and in addition he was given another title—that of Captain-General of the large fleet which was to be fitted out to sail to the new colonies. He was entrusted with the royal seal which gave him the right to grant letters patent, to issue commissions, and to appoint deputies in the royal name. A coat-of-arms was also granted to him in which, in its original form, the lion and castle of Leon and Castile were quartered with islands of the sea *or* on a field *azure*, and five anchors *or* on a field *azure*. This was changed from time to time, chiefly by Columbus himself, who afterwards added a continent to the islands, and modified the blazonry of the lion and castle to agree with those on the royal arms—a piece of ignorance and childish arrogance which was quite characteristic of him.[1]

[1] A motto has since been associated with the coat-of-arms, although it is not certain that Columbus adopted it in his lifetime. In one form it reads:

"Por Castilla é por Léon
Nueva Mundo halló Colon."

(For Castile and Leon Columbus found a New World.)

And in the other:

"A Castilla y a Léon
Nuevo Mundo dió Colon."

(To Castile and Leon Columbus gave a New World.)

Equally characteristic and less excusable was his acceptance of the pension of ten thousand maravedis which had been offered to the member of the expedition who should first sight land. Columbus was granted a very large gratuity on his arrival in Barcelona, and even taking the product of the islands at a tenth part of their value as estimated by him, he still had every right to suppose himself one of the richest men in Spain. Yet he accepted this paltry pension of £6, 6s. 8d. in our modern money, which, taking the increase in the purchasing power of money at an extreme estimate, would not be more than the equivalent of £36, or $180, now. Now, Columbus had not been the first person to see land; he saw the light, but it was Rodrigo *de Triana*, the look-out man on the *Pinta*, who first saw the actual land. Columbus in his narrative to the King and Queen would be sure to make much of the seeing of the light, and not so much of the actual sighting of land; and he was on the spot, and the reward was granted to him. Even if we [redacted]e that in strict equity Columbus was entitled to it, it was [redacted]t a matter capable of argument, if only Rodrigo de Triana [redacted]een there to argue it; and what are we to think of the [redacted]ral of the Ocean Seas and Viceroy of the Indies who thus what can only be called a mean advantage of a poor sea- [redacted]n his employ? It would have been a competence and a snug fortune to Rodrigo de Triana; it was a mere flea-bite to a who was thinking in eighth parts of continents. It may [redacted]ue, as Oviedo alleges, that Columbus transferred it to [redacted]riz Enriquez; but he had no right to provide for her out of [redacted]ey that in all equity and decency ought to have gone to [redacted]ther and a poorer man. His biographers, some of whom have [redacted]l with his canonisers in insisting upon seeing virtue in his [redacted]ry action, have gone to all kinds of ridiculous extremes in [redacted]ounting for this piece of meanness. Irving says that it was subject in which his whole ambition was involved"; but [redacted]lain person will regard it as an instance of greed and love of [redacted]ney. We must not shirk facts like this if we wish to know man as he really was. That he was capable of kindness and [redacted]nerosity, and that he was in the main kind-hearted, we have [redacted]rtunately no reason to doubt; and if I dwell on some of his [redacted]ss amiable characteristics, it is with no desire to magnify them [redacted]ut of their due proportion. They are part of that side of him [redacted]hat lay in shadow, as some side of each one of us lies; for not [redacted]all by light nor all by shade, but by light and shade combined, [redacted]is the image of a man made visible to us.

It is quite of a piece with the character of Columbus that while he was writing a receipt for the look-out man's money and thinking what a pretty gift it would make for Beatriz Enriquez he was planning a splendid and spectacular thank-offering for all the dignities to which he had been raised; and, brooding upon the vast wealth that was now to be his, that he should register a vow to furnish within seven years an expedition of four thousand horse and fifty thousand foot for the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre, and a similar force within five years after the first if it should be necessary. It is probable that the vow was a provisional one, and that its performance was to be contingent on his actual receipt and expression of the expected money; for, as we know, there was no money and no expedition. The vow was in effect a kind of religious flourish much beloved by Columbus, undertaken seriously and piously enough, but belonging rather to his public than to his private side. A much more simple and truly pious act of his was, not the promising of visionary but the sending of actual money to his old [illegible] in Savona, which he did immediately after his arrival in [illegible]. The letter which he wrote with that kindly remittance, not couched in the pompous terms which he thought suitable princes, and doubtless giving a brief, homely account of [illegible] he had done, would, if we could come by it, be a docu[illegible] beyond all price; but, like every other record of his family it has utterly perished. He wrote also from Barcelona to two brothers, Bartholomew and Giacomo, or James, since may as well give him the English equivalent of his name.

Bartholomew was in France, whither he had gone after his return from his memorable voyage with Bartholomew Diaz; he was employed as a map-maker at the Court of Anne de Beaujeu, who was reigning in the temporary absence of her brother Charles VIII. Columbus's letter reached him, but much too late for him to be able to join in the second expedition; in fact he did not reach Seville until five months after it had sailed. James, however, who was now twenty-five years old, was still at Savona; he, like Columbus, had been apprenticed to his father, but had apparently remained at home, earning his living either as a wool-weaver or merchant. He was a quiet, discreet young fellow, who never pushed himself forward very much, wore very plain clothes, and was apparently overawed by the grandeur and dignity of his elder brother. He was, however, given a responsible post in the new expedition, and soon had his fill of adventure.

The business of preparing for the new expedition was now put in hand; and Columbus, having taken leave of Ferdinand and Isabella, went to Seville to superintend the preparations. All the ports in Andalusia were ordered to supply such vessels as might be required at a reasonable cost, and the old order empowering the Admiral to press mariners into the service was renewed. But this time it was unnecessary; the difficulty now was rather to keep down the number of applicants for berths in the expedition, and to select from among the crowd of adventurers who offered themselves those most suitable for the purposes of the new colony. In this work Columbus was assisted by a commissioner whom the Sovereigns had appointed to superintend the fitting out of the expedition. This man was a cleric, Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, Archdeacon of Seville, a person of excellent family and doubtless of high piety, and of a surpassing shrewdness for this work. He was of a type very commonly produced in Spain at this period; a very able organiser, crafty and competent, but not altogether trustworthy on a point of honour. Like so many ecclesiastics of this stamp, he lived for as much power and influence as he could achieve; and though he was afterwards bishop of three sees successively, and became Patriarch of the Indies, he never let go his hold on temporal affairs. He began by being jealous of Columbus, and by objecting to the personal retinue demanded by the Admiral; and in this, if I know anything of the Admiral, he was probably justified. The matter was referred to the Sovereigns, who ordered Fonseca to carry out the Admiral's wishes; and the two were immediately at loggerheads. When the Council for the Indies was afterwards formed Fonseca became head of it, and had much power to make things pleasant or otherwise for Columbus.

It became necessary now to raise a considerable sum of money for the new expedition. Two-thirds of the ecclesiastical tithes were appropriated, and a large proportion of the confiscated property of the Jews who had been banished from Spain the year before; but this was not enough, and five million maravedis were borrowed from the Duke of Medina Sidonia in order to complete the financial supplies necessary for this very costly expedition. There was a treasurer, Francisco Pinelo, and an accountant, Juan de Soria, who had charge of all the financial arrangements; but the whole of the preparations were conducted on a ruinously expensive scale, owing to the haste which the diplomatic relations with Portugal made

necessary. The provisioning was done by a Florentine merchant named Juonato Beradi, who had an assistant named Amerigo Vespucci—who, by a strange accident, was afterwards to give his name to the continent of the New World.

While these preparations were going on, the game of diplomacy was being played between the Courts of Spain and Portugal. King John of Portugal had the misfortune to be badly advised; and he was persuaded that, although he had lost the right to the New World through his rejection of Columbus's services when they were first offered to him, he might still discover it for himself, relying for protection on the vague wording of the papal Bulls. He immediately began to prepare a fleet, nominally to go to the coast of Africa, but really to visit the newly discovered lands in the west. Hearing of these preparations, King Ferdinand sent an Ambassador to the Portuguese Court; and King John agreed also to appoint an Ambassador to discuss the whole matter of the line of demarcation, and in the meantime not to allow any of his ships to sail to the west for a period of sixty days after his Ambassador had reached Barcelona. There followed a good deal of diplomatic sharp practice; the Portuguese bribing the Spanish officials to give them information as to what was going on, and the Spaniard furnishing their envoys with double sets of letters and documents so that they could be prepared to counter any n on the part of King John. The idea of the Portuguese that the line of demarcation should be a parallel rather t a meridian; and that everything north of the Canaries sho belong to Spain and everything south to Portugal; but t would never do from the Spanish point of view. The fact tha proposal had come from Portugal, however, gave Ferdinand a opportunity of delaying the diplomatic proceedings until h own expedition was actually ready to set sail; and he wrote Columbus repeatedly, urging him to make all possible has with his preparations. In the meantime he despatched a solem embassy to Portugal, the purport of which, much beclouded and delayed by preliminary and impossible proposals, was to submit the whole question to the Pope for arbitration. And all the time he was busy petitioning the Pope to restore to Spain those concessions granted in the second Bull, but taken away again in the third.

This, being much egged on to it, the Pope ultimately did;

waking up on September 26, the day after Columbus's departure, and issuing another Bull, in which the Spanish Sovereigns were given all lands and islands, discovered or not discovered, which might be found by sailing west and south. Four Bulls; and after puzzling over them for a year, the Kings of Spain and Portugal decided to make their own Bull, and abide by it, which, having appointed commissioners, they did on June 7, 1494, when by the Treaty of Tordecillas the line of demarcation was finally fixed to pass from north to south through a point 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands.

CHAPTER V

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

JULY, August, and September in the year 1493 were busy months for Columbus, who had to superintend the buying or building and fitting of ships, the choice and collection of stores, and the selection of his company. There were fourteen caravels, some of them of low tonnage and light draught, and suitable for the navigation of rivers; and three large carracks, or ships of three to four hundred tons. The number of volunteers asked for was a thousand, but at least two thousand applied for permission to go with the expedition, and ultimately some fourteen or fifteen hundred did actually go, one hundred stowaways being included in the number. Unfortunately these adventurers were of a class compared with whom even the cut-throats and gaol-birds of the humble little expedition that had sailed the year before from Palos were useful and efficient. The universal impression about the new lands in the West was that they were places where fortunes could be picked up like dirt, and where the very shores were strewn with gold and precious stones; and every idle scamp in Spain who had a taste for adventure and a desire to get a great deal of money without working for it was anxious to visit the new territory. The result was that instead of artisans, farmers, craftsmen, and colonists, Columbus took with him a company at least half of which consisted of exceedingly well-bred young gentlemen who had no intention of doing any work, but who looked forward to a free and lawless holiday and an early return crowned with wealth and fortune. Although the expedition was primarily for the establishment of a colony, no Spanish women accompanied it; and this was but one of a succession of mistakes and stupidities.

The Admiral, however, was not to be so lonely a person as he had been on his first voyage; friends of his own choice and of a rank that made intimacy possible even with the Captain-General were to accompany him. There was James his brother; there was Friar Bernardo Buil, a Benedictine monk chosen by the Pope to be his apostolic vicar in the New World; there was

Alonso de Ojeda, a handsome young aristocrat, cousin to the Inquisitor of Spain, who was distinguished for his dash and strength and pluck; an ideal adventurer, the idol of his fellows, and one of whose daring any number of credible and incredible tales were told. There was Pedro Màrgarite, a well-born Aragonese, who was destined afterwards to cause much trouble; there was Juan Ponce de Leon, the discoverer of Florida; there was Juan de la Cosa, Columbus's faithful pilot on the *Santa Maria* on his first voyage; there was Pedro de las Casas, whose son, at this time a student in Seville, was afterwards to become the historian of the New World and the champion of decency and humanity there. There was also Doctor Chanca, a Court physician who accompanied the expedition not only in his professional capacity but also because his knowledge of botany would enable him to make a valuable report on the vegetables and fruits of the New World; there was Antonio de Marchena, one of Columbus's oldest friends, who went as astronomer to the expedition. And there was one Coma, who would have remained unknown to this day but that he wrote an exceedingly elegant letter to his friend Nicolo Syllacio in Italy, describing in flowery language the events of the second voyage; which letter, and one written by Doctor Chanca, are the only records of the outward voyage that exist. The Journal kept by Columbus on this voyage has been lost, and no copy of it remains.

Columbus settled at Cadiz during the time in which he was engaged upon the fitting out of the expedition. It was no light matter to superintend the appointment of the crews and passengers, every one of whom was probably interviewed by Columbus himself, and at the same time to keep level with Archdeacon Fonseca. This official, it will be remembered, had a disagreement with Columbus as to the number of personal attendants he was to be allowed; and on the matter being referred to the King and Queen they granted Columbus the ridiculous establishment of ten footmen and twenty other servants. Naturally Fonseca held up his hands and wondered where it would all end. It was no easy matter, moreover, on receipt of letters from the Queen about small matters which occurred to her from time to time, to answer them fully and satisfactorily, and at the same time to make out all the lists of things that would likely be required both for provisioning the voyage and

establishing a colony. The provisions carried in those days were not very different from the provisions carried on deep-sea vessels at the present time—except that canned meat, for which, with its horrors and conveniences, the world may hold Columbu responsible, had not then been invented. Unmilled wheat, salte flour, and hard biscuit formed the bulk of the provisions; salte pork was the staple of the meat supply, with an alternative c salted fish; while cheese, peas, lentils and beans, oil and vinega were also carried, and honey and almonds and raisins for th cabin table. Besides water a large provision of rough wine i casks was taken, and the dietary scale would probably compar favourably with that of the British and American mercanti service sixty years ago. In addition a great quantity of seed of all kinds were taken for planting in Española; sugar cane rice, and vines also, and an equipment of agricultural imple ments, as well as a selection of horses and other domesti animals for breeding purposes. Twenty mounted soldiers wer also carried, and the thousand and one impedimenta of naval military, and domestic existence.

In the middle of all these preparations news came that Portuguese caravel had set sail from Madeira in the direction of the new lands. Columbus immediately reported this to th King and Queen, and suggested detaching part of his fleet t pursue her; but instead King John was communicated with and he declared that if the vessel had sailed as alleged it wa without his knowledge and permission, and that he would sen three ships after her to recall her—an answer which had to b accepted, although it opened up rather alarming possibilitie of four Portuguese vessels reaching the new islands instead o one. Whether these ships ever really sailed or not, or whethe the rumour was merely a rumour and an alarm, is not certain but Columbus was ordered to push on his preparations with th greatest possible speed, to avoid Portuguese waters, but t capture any vessels which he might find in the part of the ocean allotted to Spain, and to inflict summary punishment on th crews. As it turned out he never saw any Portuguese vessels and before he had returned to Spain again the two nations had come to an amicable agreement quite independently of th Pope and his Bulls. Spain undertook to make no discoveries to the east of the line of demarcation, and Portugal none t the west of it; and so the matter remained until the inhabitants of the discovered lands began to have a voice in their own affairs.

With all his occupations, Columbus found time for some amenities, and he had his two sons, Diego and Ferdinand, staying with him at Cadiz. Great days they must have been for these two boys; days filled with excitement and commotion, with the smell of tar and the loading of the innumerable and fascinating materials of life; and many a journey they must have made on the calm waters of Cadiz harbour from ship to ship, dreaming of the distant seas that these high, quaintly-carven prows would soon be treading, and the wonderful bays and harbours far away across the world into the waters of which their anchors were to plunge.

September 24, the day before the fleet sailed, was observed as a festival, and in full ceremonial the blessing of God upon the enterprise was invoked. The ships were hung with flags and with dyed silks and tapestries; every vessel flew the royal standard; and the waters of the harbour resounded with the music of trumpets and harps and pipes and the thunder of artillery. Some Venetian galleys happened to enter the harbour as the fleet was preparing to weigh, and they joined in the salutes and demonstrations which signalled the departure. The Admiral hoisted his flag on the *Marigalante*, one of the largest of the ships; and somewhere among the smaller caravels the little *Niña*, recaulked and refitted, was also preparing to brave again the dangers over which she had so staunchly prevailed. At sunrise on the 25th the fleet weighed anchor, with all the circumstance and bustle and apparent confusion that accompany the business of sailing-ships getting under weigh. Up to the last minute Columbus had his two sons on board with him; and it was not until the ripples were beginning to talk under the bow of the *Marigalante* that he said good-bye to them and saw them rowed ashore. In bright weather, with a favourable breeze, in glory and dignity, and with high hopes in his heart, the Admiral set out once more on the long sea road.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND VOYAGE

THE second voyage of Columbus, profoundly interesting as it must have been to him and to the numerous company to whom these waters were a strange and new region, has not the romantic interest for us that his first voyage had. To the faith that guided him on his first venture knowledge and certainty had now been added; he was going by a familiar road; for to the mariner a road that he has once followed is a road that he knows. As a matter of fact, however, this second voyage was a far greater test of Columbus's skill as a navigator than the first voyage had been. If his navigation had been more haphazard he might never have found again the islands of his first discovery; and the fact that he made a landfall exactly where he wished to make it shows a high degree of exactness in his method of ascertaining latitude, and is another instance of his skill in estimating his dead-reckoning. If he had been equipped with a modern quadrant and Greenwich chronometers he could not have made a quicker voyage nor a more exact landfall.

It will be remembered that he had been obliged to hurry away from Española without visiting the islands of the Caribs as he had wished to do. He knew that these islands lay to the south-east of Española, and on his second voyage he therefore took a course rather more southerly in order to make them instead of Guanahani or Española. From the day they left Spain his ships had pleasant light airs from the east and north-east which wafted them steadily but slowly on their course. In a week they had reached the Grand Canary, where they paused to make some repairs to one of the ships which was leaking. Two days later they anchored at Gomera, and loaded up with such supplies as could be procured there better than in Spain. Pigs, goats, sheep, and cows were taken on board; domestic fowls also, and a variety of orchard plants and fruit seeds as well as a provision of oranges, lemons, and melons. They sailed from Gomera on the 7th of October, but the winds were

so light that it was a week later before they had passed Ferro and were once more in the open Atlantic.

On setting his course from Ferro Columbus issued sealed instructions to the captain of each ship which, in the event of the fleet becoming scattered, would guide them to the harbour of La Navidad in Española; but the captains had strict orders not to open these instructions unless their ships became separated from the fleet, as Columbus still wished to hold for himself the secret of this mysterious road to the West. There were no disasters, however, and no separations. The trade-wind blew softly and steadily, wafting them south and west; and because of the more southerly course steered on this voyage they did not even encounter the weed of the Sargasso Sea, which they left many leagues on their starboard hand. The only incident of the voyage was a sudden severe hurricane, a brief summer tempest which raged throughout one night and terrified a good many of the voyagers, whose superstitious fears were only allayed when they saw the flames of the light of Saint Elmo playing about the rigging of the Admiral's ship. It was just the Admiral's luck that this phenomenon should be observed over his ship and over none of the others; it added to his prestige as a person peculiarly favoured by the divine protection, and confirmed his own belief that he held a heavenly as well as a royal commission.

The water supply had been calculated a little too closely, and began to run low. The hurried preparation of the ships had resulted as usual in bad work; most of them were leaking, and the crew were constantly at work at the pumps; and there was the usual discontent. Columbus, however, knew by the signs as well as by his dead-reckoning that he was somewhere close to land; and with a fine demonstration of confidence he increased the ration of water, instead of lowering it, assuring the crews that they would be ashore in a day or two. On Saturday evening, November 2, although no land was in sight, Columbus was so sure of his position that he ordered the fleet to take in sail and go on slowly until morning. As the Sunday dawned and the sky to the west was cleared of the morning bank of clouds, the look-out on the *Marigalante* reported land ahead; and sure enough the first sunlight of that day showed them a green and verdant island a few leagues away.

As they approached it Columbus christened it Dominica, in honour of the day on which it was discovered. He sailed round it; but as there was no harbour, and as another island was in

sight to the north, he sailed on in that direction. This little island he christened Marigalante; and going ashore with a retinue he hoisted the royal banner, and formally took possession of the whole group of six islands which were visible from the high ground. There were no inhabitants on the island, and the voyagers spent some hours wandering about its tangled woods and smelling the rich odours of spice, and tasting strange and unfamiliar fruits. They next sailed on to an island to the north, which Columbus christened Guadaloupe, as a memorial of the shrine in Estremadura to which he had made a solemn pilgrimage. They landed on this island, and remained a day there, in the course of which they made some very remarkable discoveries.

The villagers were not altogether unfriendly, although they were shy at first; but red caps and hawks' bells had their usual effect. There were signs of warfare, in the shape of bone-tipped arrows; there were tame parrots much larger than those of the northern islands; they found pottery and rough wood-carving, and the unmistakable stern timber of a European vessel. But they discovered stranger things than that. They found human skulls used as household utensils, and gruesome fragments of human bodies, unmistakable remains of a feast; and they realised that at last they were in the presence of a man-eating tribe. Later they came to know something of the habits of the islanders; how they made raiding expeditions to the neighbouring islands, and carried off large numbers of prisoners, retaining the women as concubines and eating the men. The boys were mutilated and fattened like capons, being employed as labourers until they had arrived at years of discretion, at which point they were killed and eaten, as these cannibal epicures did not care for the flesh of women and boys. There were a great number of women on the island, and many of them were taken off to the ships—with their own consent, according to Doctor Chanca. The men, however, eluded the Spaniards, and would not come on board, having doubtless very clear views about the ultimate destination of men who were taken prisoners. Some women from a neighbouring island, who had been captured by the cannibals, came to Columbus and begged to be taken on board his ship for protection; but instead of receiving them he decked them with ornaments and sent them ashore again. The cannibals artfully carried off their ornaments and sent them back to get some more.

The peculiar habits of the islanders added an unusual

excitement to shore leave, and there was as a rule no trouble in collecting the crews and bringing them off to the ships at nightfall. But on one evening it was discovered that one of the captains and eight men had not returned. An exploring party was sent off to search for them, but they came back without having found anything, except a village in the middle of the forest from which the inhabitants had fled at their approach, leaving behind them in the cooking pots a half-cooked meal of human remains—an incident which gave the explorers a distaste for further search. Young Alonso de Ojeda, however, had no fear of the cannibals; this was just the kind of occasion in which he revelled; and he offered to take a party of forty men into the interior to search for the missing men. He went right across the island, but was able to discover nothing except birds and fruits and unknown trees; and Columbus, in great distress of mind, had to give up his men for lost. He took in wood and water, and was on the point of weighing anchor when the missing men appeared on the shore and signalled for a boat. It appeared that they had got lost in a tangled forest in the interior, that they had tried to climb the trees in order to get their bearings by the stars, but without success; and that they had finally struck the seashore and followed it until they had arrived opposite the anchorage.

They brought some women and boys with them; and the fleet must now have had a large number of these willing or unwilling captives. This was the first organised transaction of slavery on the part of Columbus, whose design was to send slaves regularly back to Spain in exchange for the cattle and supplies necessary for the colonies. There was not very much said now about religious conversion, but only about exchanging the natives for cattle. The fine point of Christopher's philosophy on this subject had been rubbed off; he had taken the first step a year ago on the beach at Guanahani, and after that the road opened out broad before him. Slaves for cattle, and cattle for the islands; and wealth from cattle and islands for Spain, and payment from Spain for Columbus, and money from Columbus for the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre—these were the links in the chain of hope that bound him to his pious idea. He had seen the same thing done by the Portuguese on the Guinea coast, and it never occurred to him that there was anything the matter with it. On the contrary, at this time his idea was only to take slaves from among the Caribs and man-eating islanders as a punishment for their misdeeds; but this, like his other

fine ideas, soon had to give way before the tide of greed and conquest.

The Admiral was now anxious to get back to La Navidad, and discover the condition of the colony which he had left behind him there. He therefore sailed from Guadaloupe on November 10, and steered to the north-west. His captive islanders told him that the mainland lay to the south; and if he had listened to them and sailed south he would have probably landed on the coast of South America in a fortnight. He shaped his course instead to the north-west, passing many islands, but not pausing until the 14th, when he reached an island named by him Santa Cruz. He found more Caribs here, and his men had a brush with them, one of the crew being wounded by a poisoned arrow, of which he died in a few days. The Carib chiefs were captured and put in irons. They sailed again, and passed a group of islets which Columbus named after Saint Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins; discovered Porto Rico also, in one of the beautiful harbours of which they anchored and stayed for two days. Sailing now to the west, they made land again on the 22nd of November; and coasting along it they soon sighted the mountain of Monte Christi, and Columbus recognised that he was on the north coast of Española.

CHAPTER VII

THE EARTHLY PARADISE REVISITED

ON the 25th November 1493 Columbus once more dropped his anchor in the harbour of Monte Christi, and a party was sent ashore to prospect for a site suitable for the new town which he intended to build, for he was not satisfied with the situation of La Navidad. There was a large river close by; and while the party was surveying the land they came suddenly upon two dead bodies lying by the river-side, one with a rope round its neck and the other with a rope round its feet. The bodies were too much decomposed to be recognisable; nevertheless to the party rambling about in the sunshine and stillness of that green place the discovery was a very gruesome one. They may have thought much, but they said little. They returned to the ship, and resumed their search on the next day, when they found two more corpses, one of which was seen to have a large quantity of beard. As all the natives were beardless, this was a very significant and unpleasant discovery, and the explorers returned at once and reported what they had seen to Columbus. He thereupon set sail for La Navidad; but the navigation off that part of the coast was necessarily slow because of the number of the shoals and banks, on one of which the Admiral's ship had been lost the year before, and the short voyage occupied three days.

They arrived at La Navidad late on the evening of the 27th —too late to make it advisable to land. Some natives came out in a canoe, rowed round the Admiral's ship, stopped and looked at it, and then rowed away again. When the fleet had anchored Columbus ordered two guns to be fired; but there was no response except from the echoes that went rattling among the hills, and from the frightened birds that rose screaming and circling from the shore. No guns and no signal fires; no sign of human habitation whatever; and no sound out of the weird darkness except the lap of the water and the call of the birds. . . . The night passed in anxiety and depression, and in a certain degree of nervous tension, which was relieved at two or three

o'clock in the morning by the sound of paddles and the looming of a canoe through the dusky starlight. Native voices were heard from the canoe asking in a loud voice for the Admiral; and when the visitors had been directed to the *Marigalante* they refused to go on board until Columbus himself had spoken to them, and they had seen by the light of a lantern that it was the Admiral himself. The chief of them was a cousin of Guacanagari, who said that the King was ill of a wound in his leg, or that he would certainly have come himself to welcome the Admiral. The Spaniards? Yes, they were well, said the young chief; or rather, he added ominously, those that remained were well, but some had died of illness, and some had been killed in quarrels that had arisen among them. He added that the province had been invaded by two neighbouring kings, who had burned many of the native houses. This news, although grave, was a relief from the dreadful uncertainty that had prevailed in the early part of the night, and the Admiral's company, somewhat consoled, took a little sleep.

In the morning a party was sent ashore to La Navidad. Not a boat was in sight, nor any native canoes; the harbour was silent and deserted. When the party had landed and gone up to the place where the fort had been built they found no fort there; only the blackened and charred remains of a fort. The whole thing had been burned level with the ground, and amid the blackened ruins they found pieces of rag and clothing. The natives, instead of coming to greet them, lurked guiltily behind trees, and when they were seen fled away into the woods. All this was very disquieting indeed, and in significant contrast to their behaviour of the year before. The party from the ship threw buttons and beads and bells to the retiring natives in order to try and induce them to come forward, but only four approached, one of whom was a relation of Guacanagari. These four consented to go into the boat and to be rowed out to the ship. Columbus then spoke to them through his interpreter; and they admitted what had been only too obvious to the party that went ashore—that the Spaniards were all dead, and that not one of the garrison remained. It seemed that two neighbouring kings, Caonabo and Mayreni, had made an attack upon the fort, burned the buildings, and killed and wounded most of the defenders; and that Guacanagari, who had been fighting on their behalf, had also been wounded and been obliged to retire. The natives offered to go and fetch Guacanagari himself, and departed with that object.

In the greatest anxiety the Admiral and his company passed that day and night waiting for the King to come. Early the next morning Columbus himself went ashore and visited the spot where the settlement had been. There he found destruction whole and complete, with nothing but a few rags of clothing as an evidence that the place had ever been inhabited by human beings. As Guacanagari did not appear, some of the Spaniards began to suspect that he had had a hand in the matter, and proposed immediate reprisal; but Columbus, believing still in the man who had "loved him so much that it was wonderful," did not take this view, and his belief in Guacanagari's loyalty was confirmed by the discovery that his own dwelling had also been burned down.

Columbus set some of his party searching in the ditch of the fort in case any treasure should have been buried there, as he had ordered it should be in event of danger, and while this was going on he walked along the coast for a few miles to visit a spot which he thought might be suitable for the new settlement. At a distance of a mile or two he found a village of seven or eight huts, from which the inhabitants fled at his approach, carrying such of their goods as were portable, and leaving the rest hidden in the grass. Here were found several things that had belonged to the Spaniards, and which were not likely to have been bartered; new Moorish mantles, stockings, bolts of cloth, and one of the Admiral's lost anchors; other articles also, among them a dead man's head wrapped up with great care in a small basket. Shaking their own heads sadly, Columbus and his party returned. Suddenly they came on some suspicious-looking mounds of earth over which new grass was growing. An examination of these showed them to be the graves of eleven of the Spaniards, the remains of the clothing being quite sufficient to identify them. Doctor Chanca, who examined them, thought that they had not been dead two months. Speculation came to an end in the face of this eloquent certainty; there were the dead bodies of some of the colonists; and the voyagers knelt round with bare heads while the bodies were replaced in the grave and the ceremony of Christian burial was performed over them.

Little by little the dismal story was elicited from the natives, who became less timid when they saw that the Spaniards meant them no harm. It seemed that Columbus had no sooner gone

away than the colonists began to abandon themselves to every kind of excess. While the echo of the Admiral's wise counsels was yet in their ears they began to disobey his orders. Honest work they had no intention of doing; and although Diego Arana, their commander, did his best to keep order, and although one or two of the others were faithful to him and to Columbus, their authority was utterly insufficient to check the lawless folly of the rest. Instead of searching for gold mines, they possessed themselves by force of every ounce of gold they could steal or seize from the natives, treating them with both cruelty and contempt. More brutal excesses followed as a matter of course. Guacanagari, in his kindly indulgence and generosity, had allowed them to take three native wives apiece, although he himself and his people were content with one. But of course the Spaniards had thrown off all restraint, however mild, and ran amok among the native inhabitants, seizing their wives and seducing their daughters. Upon this naturally followed dissensions among themselves, jealousy coming hot upon the heels of unlawful possession; and, in the words of Irving, "the natives beheld with astonishment the beings whom they had worshipped as descended from the skies abandoned to the grossest of earthly passions and raging against each other with worse than brutal ferocity."

Upon their strifes and dissensions followed another breach of the Admiral's wise regulations; they no longer cared to remain together in the fort, but split up into groups and went off with their women into the woods, reverting to a savagery beside which the gentle existence of the natives was high civilisation. There were squabbles and fights in which one or two of the Spaniards were killed; and Pedro Gutierrez and Rodrigo de Escovedo, whom Columbus had appointed as lieutenants to Arana, headed a faction of revolt against his authority, and took themselves off with nine other Spaniards and a great number of women. They had heard a great deal about the mines of Cibao, and they decided to go in search of them and secure their treasures for themselves. They went inland into a territory which was under the rule of King Caonabo, a very fierce Carib, who was not a native of Española, but had come there as an adventurer and remained as a conqueror. Although he resented the intrusion of the Spaniards into the island, he would not have dared to come and attack them there if they had obeyed the Admiral's orders and remained in the territory of Guacanagari; but when they came into his own country he had them in a trap,

and it was easy for him to fall upon those foolish, swaggering Spaniards and put them to death. He then decided to go and take the fort.

He formed an alliance with the neighbouring king, Mayreni, whose province was in the west of the island. Getting together a force of warriors these two kings marched rapidly and stealthily through the forest for several days until they arrived at its northern border. They came in the dead of night to the neighbourhood of La Navidad, where the inhabitants of the fortress, some ten in number, were fast asleep. Fast asleep were the remaining dozen or so of the Spaniards who were living in houses or huts in the neighbourhood; fast asleep also the gentle natives, not dreaming of troubles from any quarter but that close at hand. The sweet silence of the tropical night was suddenly broken by frightful yells as Caonabo and his warriors rushed the fortress and butchered the inhabitants, setting fire to it and to the houses round about. As their flimsy huts burst into flames the surprised Spaniards rushed out, only to be fallen upon by the infuriated blacks. Eight of the Spaniards rushed naked into the sea and were drowned; the rest were butchered. Guacanagari manfully came to their assistance and with his own followers fought throughout the night; but his were a gentle and unwarlike people, and they were easily routed. The King himself was badly wounded in the thigh; but Caonabo's principal object seems to have been the destruction of the Spaniards, and when that was completed he and his warriors, laden with the spoils, retired.

Thus Columbus, walking on the shore with his native interpreter, or sitting in his cabin listening with knitted brow to the accounts of the islanders, learns of the complete and utter failure of his first hopes. It has come to this. These are the real first-fruits of his glorious conquest and discovery. The New World has served but as a virgin field for the Old Adam. He who had sought to bring light and life to these happy islanders had brought darkness and death; they had innocently clasped the sword he had extended to them and cut themselves. The Christian occupation of the New World had opened with vice, cruelty, and destruction; the veil of innocence had been rent in twain, and could never be mended or joined again. And the Earthly Paradise in which life had gone so happily, of which sun and shower had been the true rulers, and the green sprouting harvests the only riches, had been turned into a shambles

by the introduction of human rule and civilised standards of wealth. Gold first and then women, things beautiful and innocent in the happy native condition of the islands, had been the means of the disintegration and death of this first colony. These are serious considerations for any coloniser; solemn considerations for a discoverer who is only on the verge and beginning of his empire-making; mournful considerations for Christopher Columbus as he surveys the blackened ruins of the fort, or stands bareheaded by the grass-covered graves.

There seemed to be a certain hesitancy on the part of Guacanagari to present himself; for though he kept announcing his intention of coming to visit the Admiral, he did not come. A couple of days after the discovery of the remains, however, he sent a message to Columbus begging him to come and see him, which the Admiral accordingly did, accompanied by a formal retinue, and carrying with him the usual presents. Guacanagari was in bed complaining of a wounded leg, and he told the story of the settlement very much as Columbus had already heard it from the other natives. He pointed to his own wounded leg as a sign that he had been loyal and faithful to his friendly promises; but when the leg was examined by the surgeon in order that it might be dressed no wound could be discovered, and it was obvious to Doctor Chanca that the skin had not been broken. This seemed odd; Friar Buil was so convinced that the whole story was a deception that he wished the Admiral to execute Guacanagari on the spot. Columbus, although he was puzzled, was by no means convinced that Guacanagari had been unfaithful to him, and decided to do nothing for the present. He invited the *cacique* to come on board the flagship; which he did, being greatly interested in some of the Carib prisoners, notably a handsome woman, named by the Spaniards Doña Catalina, with whom he held a long conversation.

Relations between the Admiral and the *cacique*, although outwardly cordial, were altogether different from what they had been in the happy days after their first meeting; the man seemed to shrink from all the evidence of Spanish power, and when they proposed to hang a cross round his neck the native king, much as he loved trinkets and toys, expressed a horror and fear of this jewel when he learned that it was an emblem of the Christian faith. He had seen a little too much of the Christian religion; and Heaven only knows with what terror and de-

pression the emblem of the cross inspired him. He went ashore; and when a messenger was sent to search for him a few days afterwards, it was found that he had moved his whole establishment into the interior of the island. The beautiful native woman Catalina escaped to shore and disappeared at the same time; and the two events were connected in the minds of some of the Spaniards, and held, wrongly as it turned out, to be significant of a deep plot of native treachery.

The most urgent need was to build the new settlement and lay out a town. Several small parties were sent out to reconnoitre the coast in both directions, but none of them found a suitable place; and on December 7 the whole fleet sailed to the east in the hope of finding a better position. They were driven by adverse winds into a harbour some thirty miles to the east of Monte Christi, and when they went ashore they decided that this was as good a site as any for the new town. There was about a quarter of a mile of level sandy beach enclosed by headlands on either side; there was any amount of rock and stones for building, and there was a natural barrier of hills and mountains a mile or so inland that would protect a camp from that side. The soil was very fertile, the vegetation luxuriant; and the mango swamps a little way inland drained into a basin or lake which provided an unlimited water supply. Columbus therefore set about establishing a little town, to which he gave the name of Isabella. Streets and squares were laid out, and rows of temporary buildings made of wood and thatched with grass were hastily run up for the accommodation of the members of the expedition, while the foundations of three stone buildings were also marked out and the excavations put in hand. These buildings were the church, the storehouse, and a residence for Columbus as Governor-General.

The stores were landed, the horses and cattle accommodated ashore, the provisions, ammunition, and agricultural implements also. Labourers were set to digging out the foundations of the stone buildings, carpenters to cutting down trees and running up the light wooden houses that were to serve as barracks for the present; masons were employed in hewing stones and building landing-piers; and all the crowd of well-born adventurers were set to work with their hands, much to their disgust. This was by no means the life they had imagined, and at the first sign of hard work they turned sulky and dis-

contented. There was, to be sure, some reason for their discontent. Things had not quite turned out as Columbus had promised they should; there was no store of gold, nor any sign of great desire on the part of the natives to bring any; and to add to their other troubles, illness began to break out in the camp. The freshly-turned, rank soil had a bad effect on the health of the garrison; the lake, which had promised to be so pleasant a feature in the new town, gave off dangerous malarial vapours at night; and among the sufferers from this trouble was Columbus himself, who endured for some weeks all the pains and lassitude of the disagreeable fever.

The ships were now empty and ready for the return voyage, and as soon as Columbus was better he set to work to face the situation. After all his promises it would never do to send them home empty or in ballast; a cargo of stones from the new-found Indies would not be well received in Spain. The natives had told him that somewhere in the island existed the gold mines of Cibao, and he determined to make an attempt to find these, so that he could send his ships home laden with a cargo that would be some indemnity for the heavy cost of the expedition and some compensation for the bad news he must write with regard to his first settlement. Young Ojeda was chosen to lead an expedition of fifteen picked men into the interior; and as the gold mines were said to be in a part of the island not under the command of Guacanagari, but in the territory of the dreaded Caonabo, there was no little anxiety felt about the expedition.

Ojeda started in the beginning of January 1494, and marched southwards through dense forests until, having crossed a mountain range, he came down into a beautiful and fertile valley, where they were hospitably received by the natives. They saw plenty of gold in the sand of the river that watered the valley, which sand the natives had a way of washing so that the gold was separated from it; and there seemed to be so much wealth there that Ojeda hurried back to the new city of Isabella to make his report to Columbus. The effect upon the discontented colonists was remarkable. Once more everything was right; wealth beyond the dreams of avarice was at their hand; and all they had to do was to stretch out their arms and take it. Columbus felt that he need no longer delay the despatch of twelve of his ships on the homeward voyage. If he had not got golden cargoes for them, at any rate he had got the next best

MAP OF THE NORTHERN COAST OF ESPANOLA

Drawn by Christopher Columbus

thing, which was the certainty of gold; and it did not matter whether it was in the ships or in his storehouse. He had news to send home at any rate, and a great variety of things to ask for in return, and he therefore set about writing his report to the Sovereigns. Other people, as we know, were writing letters too; the reiterated promise of gold, and the marvellous anecdotes which these credulous settlers readily believed from the natives, such as that there was a rock close by out of which gold would burst if you struck it with a club, raised greed and expectation in Spain to a fever pitch, and prepared the reaction which followed.

We may now read the account of the New World as Columbus sent it home to the King and Queen of Spain in the end of January 1494, and as they read it some weeks later. Their comments, written in the margin of the original, are printed in italics at the end of each paragraph. It was drawn up in the form of a memorandum, and entrusted to Antonio de Torres, who was commanding the return expedition.

"What you, Antonio de Torres, captain of the ship *Marigalante* and Alcalde of the City of Isabella, are to say and supplicate on my part to the King and Queen, our Lords, is as follows:—

"First. Having delivered the letters of credence which you carry from me for their Highnesses, you will kiss for me their Royal feet and hands and will recommend me to their Highnesses, as to a King and Queen, my natural Lords, in whose service I desire to end my days: as you will be able to say this more fully to their Highnesses, according to what you have seen and known of me.

["*Their Highnesses hold him in their favour.*]

"Item. Although by the letters I write to their Highnesses, and also the father Friar Buil and the Treasurer, they will be able to understand all that has been done here since our arrival, and this very minutely and extensively: nevertheless, you will say to their Highnesses on my part, that it has pleased God to give me such favour in their service, that up to the present time I do not find less, nor has less been found in anything than what I wrote and said and affirmed to their Highnesses in the past: but rather, by the Grace of God, I hope that it will appear by

works much more clearly and very soon, because such signs and indications of spices have been found on the shores of the sea alone, without having gone inland, that there is reason that very much better results may be hoped for: and this also may be hoped for in the mines of gold, because by two persons only who went to investigate, each one on his own part, without remaining there because there was not many people, so many rivers have been discovered so filled with gold, that all who saw it and gathered specimens of it with the hands alone, came away so pleased and say such things in regard to its abundance, that I am timid about telling it and writing it to their Highnesses: but because Gorbalan, who was one of the discoverers, is going yonder, he will tell what he saw, although another named Hojeda remains here, a servant of the Duke of Medinaceli, a very discreet youth and very prudent, who without doubt and without comparison even, discovered much more according to the memorandum which he brought of the rivers, saying that there is an incredible quantity in each one of them: for this their Highnesses may give thanks to God, since He has been so favourable to them in all their affairs.

[" *Their Highnesses give many thanks to God for this, and consider as a very signal service all that the Admiral has done in this matter and is doing: because they know that after God they are indebted to him for all they have had, and will have in this affair: and as they are writing him more fully about this, they refer him to their letter.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses, although I already have written it to them, that I desired greatly to be able to send them a larger quantity of gold in this fleet, from that which it is hoped may be gathered here, but the greater part of our people who are here, have fallen suddenly ill: besides, this fleet cannot remain here longer, both on account of the great expense it occasions and because this time is suitable for those persons who are to bring the things which are greatly needed here, to go and be able to return: as, if they delay going away from here, those who are to return will not be able to do so by May: and besides this, if I wished to undertake to go to the mines or rivers now, with the well people who are here, both on the sea and in the settlement on land, I would have many difficulties and even dangers, because in order to go twenty-three or twenty-four leagues from here where there are harbours and rivers to cross,

and in order to cover such a long route and reach there at the time which would be necessary to gather the gold, a large quantity of provisions would have to be carried, which cannot be carried on the shoulders, nor are there beasts of burden here which could be used for this purpose: nor are the roads and passes sufficiently prepared, although I have commenced to get them in readiness so as to be passable: and also it was very inconvenient to leave the sick here in an open place, in huts, with the provisions and supplies which are on land: for although these Indians may have shown themselves to the discoverers, and show themselves every day, to be very simple and not malicious: nevertheless, as they come here among us each day, it did not appear that it would be a good idea to risk losing these people and the supplies. This loss an Indian with a piece of burning wood would be able to cause by setting fire to the huts, because they are always going and coming by night and by day: on their account, we have guards in the camp, while the settlement is open and defenceless.

[" *That he did well.*]

" Moreover, as we have seen among those who went by land to make discoveries that the greater part fell sick after returning, and some of them even were obliged to turn back on the road, it was also reasonable to fear that the same thing would happen to those who are well, who would now go, and as a consequence they would run the risk of two dangers: the one, that of falling sick yonder, in the same work, where there is no house nor any defence against that *cacique* who is called Caonabo, who is a very bad man according to all accounts, and much more audacious and who, seeing us there, sick and in such disorder, would be able to undertake what he would not dare if we were well: and with this difficulty there is another—that of bringing here what gold we might obtain, because we must either bring a small quantity and go and come each day and undergo the risk of sickness, or it must be sent with some part of the people, incurring the same danger of losing it.

[" *He did well.*]

" So that, you will say to their Highnesses, that these are the causes why the fleet has not been at present detained, and why more gold than the specimens has not been sent them:

but confiding in the mercy of God. who in everything and for everything has guided us as far as here, these people will quickly become convalescent, as they are already doing, because only certain places in the country suit them and they then recover; and it is certain that if they had some fresh meat in order to convalesce, all with the aid of God would very quickly be on foot, and even the greater part would already be convalescent at this time: nevertheless they will be re-established. With the few healthy ones who remain here, each day work is done toward enclosing the settlement and placing it in a state of some defence and the supplies in safety, which will be accomplished in a short time, because it is to be only a small dry wall. For the Indians are not a people to undertake anything unless they should find us sleeping, even though they might have thought of it in the manner in which they served the others who remained here. Only on account of their (the Spaniards') lack of caution—they being so few—and the great opportunities they gave the Indians to have and do what they did, they would never have dared to undertake to injure them if they had seen that they were cautious. And this work being finished, I will then undertake to go to the said rivers, either starting upon the road from here and seeking the best possible expedients, or going around the island by sea as far as that place from which it is said it cannot be more than six or seven leagues to the said rivers. In such a manner that the gold can be gathered and placed in security in some fortress or tower which can then be constructed there, in order to keep it securely until the time when the two caravels return here, and in order that then, with the first suitable weather for sailing this course, it may be sent to a place of safety.

[" *That this is well and must be done in this manner.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses, as has been said, that the cause of the general sicknesses common to all is the change of water and air, because we see that it extends to all conditions and few are in danger: consequently, for the preservation of health, after God, it is necessary that these people be provided with the provisions to which they are accustomed in Spain, because neither they, nor others who may come anew, will be able to serve their Highnesses if they are not well: and this provision must continue until a supply is accumulated here from what shall be sowed and planted here. I say wheat

and barley, and vines, of which little has been done this year: because a site for the town could not be selected before, and then when it was selected the few labourers who were here became sick, and they, even though they had been well, had so few and such lean and meagre beasts of burden, that they were able to do but little: nevertheless, they have sown something, more in order to try the soil which appears very wonderful, so that from it some relief may be hoped in our necessities. We are very sure, as the result makes it apparent to us, that in this country wheat as well as the vine will grow very well: but the fruit must be waited for, which, if it corresponds to the quickness with which the wheat grows and of some few vine-shoots which were planted, certainly will not cause regret here for the productions of Andalusia or Sicily: neither is it different with the sugar-canes according to the manner in which some few that were planted have grown. For it is certain that the sight of the land of these islands, as well of the mountains and sierras and waters as of the plains where there are rich rivers, is so beautiful, that no other land on which the sun shines can appear better or as beautiful.

[" *Since the land is such, it must be managed that the greatest possible quantity of all things shall be sown, and Don Juan de Fonseca is to be written to send continually all that is necessary for this purpose.*]

" Item. You will say that, inasmuch as much of the wine which the fleet brought was wasted on this journey, and this, according to what the greater number say, was because of the bad workmanship which the coopers did in Seville, the greatest necessity we feel here at the present time is for wines, and it is what we desire most to have: and although we may have biscuit as well as wheat sufficient for a longer time, nevertheless it is necessary that a reasonable quantity should also be sent, because the journey is long and provision cannot be made each day; and in the same manner some salted meat, I say bacon, and other salt meat better than that we brought on this journey. It is necessary that each time a caravel comes here, fresh meat shall be sent, and even more than that, lambs and little ewe lambs, more females than males, and some little yearling calves, male and female, and some he-asses and she-asses and some mares for labour and breeding, as there are none of these animals here of any value or which can be made use of by man. And

because I apprehend that their Highnesses may not be in Seville, and that the officials or ministers will not provide these things without their express order, and as it is necessary they should come at the first opportunity, and as in consultation and reply the time for the departure of the vessels—which must be here during all of May—will be past: you will say to their Highnesses that I charged and commanded you to pledge the gold you are carrying yonder and place it in possession of some merchant in Seville, who will furnish therefor the necessary maravedis to load two caravels with wine and wheat and the other things of which you are taking a memorandum; which merchant will carry or send the said gold to their Highnesses that they may see it and receive it, and cause what shall have been expended for fitting out and loading of the said two caravels to be paid: and in order to comfort and strengthen these people remaining here, the utmost efforts must be made for the return of these caravels for all the month of May, that the people before commencing the summer may see and have some refreshment from these things, especially the invalids: the things of which we are already in great need here are such as raisins, sugar, almonds, honey and rice, which should have been sent in large quantities and very little was sent, and that which came is already used and consumed, and even the greater part of the medicines which were brought from there, on account of the multitude of sick people. You are carrying memoranda signed by my hand, as has been said, of things for the people in good health as well as for the sick. You will provide these things fully if the money is sufficient, or at least the things which it is most necessary to send at once, in order that the said two vessels can bring them, and you can arrange with their Highnesses to have the remaining things sent by other vessels as quickly as possible.

[" *Their Highnesses sent an order to Don Juan de Fonseca to obtain at once information about the persons who committed the fraud of the casks, and to cause all the damage to the wine to be recovered from them, with the costs: and he must see that the canes which are sent are of good quality, and that the other things mentioned here are provided at once.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that as there is no language here by means of which these people can be made to understand our Holy Faith, as their Highnesses and also we

who are here desire, although we will do all we can towards it —I am sending some of the cannibals in the vessels, men and women and male and female children, whom their Highnesses can order placed with persons from whom they can better learn the language, making use of them in service, and ordering that little by little more pains be taken with them than with other slaves, that they may learn one from the other: if they do not see or speak with each other until some time has passed, they will learn more quickly there than here, and will be better interpreters—although we will not cease to do as much as possible here. It is true that as there is little intercourse between these people from one island to another, there is some difference in their language, according to how far distant they are from each other. And as, of the other islands, those of the cannibals are very large and very well populated, it would appear best to take some of their men and women and send them yonder to Castile, because by taking them away, it may cause them to abandon at once that inhuman custom which they have of eating men; and by learning the language there in Castile, they will receive baptism much more quickly, and provide for the safety of their souls. Even among the peoples who are not cannibals we shall gain great credit, by their seeing that we can seize and take captive those from whom they are accustomed to receive injuries, and of whom they are in such terror that they are frightened by one man alone. You will certify to their Highnesses that the arrival here and sight of such a fine fleet all together has inspired very great authority here and assured very great security for future things: because all the people on this great island and in the other islands, seeing the good treatment which those who well behave receive, and the bad treatment given to those who behave ill, will very quickly render obedience, so that they can be considered as vassals of their Highnesses. And as now they not only do willingly whatever is required of them by our people, but further, they voluntarily undertake everything which they understand may please us, their Highnesses may also be certain that in many respects, as much for the present as for the future, the coming of this fleet has given them a great reputation, and not less yonder among the Christian princes; which their Highnesses will be better able to consider and understand than I can tell them.

["*That he is to be told what has befallen the cannibals who came here. That it is very well and must be done in this manner,*

but that he must try as much as possible to bring them to our Holy Catholic faith and do the same with the inhabitants of the island where he is.]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that the safet the souls of the said cannibals, and further of those here, inspired the thought that the more there are taken yo the better it will be, and their Highnesses can be served in this manner: having seen how necessary the flocks beasts of burden are here, for the sustenance of the p who must be here, and even of all these islands, their nesses can give licence and permission to a sufficient n of caravels to come here each year, and bring the sai and other supplies and things to settle the country an use of the land: and this at reasonable prices at the ex those who bring them: and these things can be paid slaves from among these cannibals, a very proud and people, well proportioned and of good intelligence, wh been freed from that inhumanity, we believe will be be any other slaves. They will be freed from this cruelty as they are outside their country, and many of them taken with the row-boats which it is known how to build it being understood, however, that a trustworthy person be placed on each one of the caravels coming here, wh forbid the said caravels to stop at any other place or island this place, where the loading and unloading of all the mer dise must be done. And further, their Highnesses will be to establish their rights over these slaves which are taken fr here yonder to Spain. And you will bring or send a reply this, in order that the necessary preparations may be ma here with more confidence if it appears well to their Highnesses.

[" *This project must be held in abeyance for the present until another method is suggested from there, and the Admiral may write what he thinks in regard to it.*]

" Item. Also you will say to their Highnesses that it is more profitable and costs less to hire the vessels as the merchants hire them from Flanders, by tons, rather than in any othe manner: therefore I charged you to hire the two caravels which you are to send here, in this manner: and all the others which their Highnesses send here can be hired thus, if they consider it for their service: but I do not intend to say this of those

vessels which are to come here with their licence, for the slave trade.

[" *Their Highnesses order Don Juan de Fonseca to hire the caravels in this manner if it can be done.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses, that to avoid any further cost, I bought these caravels of which you are taking a memorandum in order to retain them here with these two ships: that is to say the *Gallega* and that other, the *Capitana*, of which I likewise purchased the three-eighths from the master of it, for the price given in the said memorandum which you are taking, signed by my hand. These ships not only will give authority and great security to the people who are obliged to remain inland and make arrangements with the Indians to gather the gold, but they will also be of service in any other dangerous matter which may arise with a strange people; besides the caravels are necessary for the discovery of the mainland and the other islands which lie between here and there; and you will entreat their Highnesses to order the maravedis which these ships cost, paid at the times which they have been promised, because without doubt they will soon receive what they cost, according to what I believe and hope in the mercy of God.

[" *The Admiral has done well, and to tell him that the sum has been paid here to the one who sold the ship, and Don Juan de Fonseca has been ordered to pay for the two caravels which the Admiral bought.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses, and will supplicate on my part as humbly as possible, that it may please them to reflect on what they will learn most fully from the letters and other writings in regard to the peace and tranquillity and concord of those who are here: and that for the service of their Highnesses such persons may be selected as shall not be suspected, and who will give more attention to the matters for which they are sent than to their own interests: and since you saw and knew everything in regard to this matter, you will speak and will tell their Highnesses the truth about all the things as you understood them, and you will endeavour that the provision which their Highnesses make in regard to it shall come with the first ships if possible, in order that there may be

no scandals here in a matter of so much importance in the service of their Highnesses.

[" *Their Highnesses are well informed in regard to this matter, and suitable provision will be made for everything.*]

" Item. You will tell their Highnesses of the situation of this city, and the beauty of the surrounding province as you saw and understood it, and how I made you its Alcalde, by the powers which I have for same from their Highnesses : whom I humbly entreat to hold the said provision in part satisfaction of your services, as I hope from their Highnesses.

[" *It pleases their Highnesses that you shall be Alcalde.*]

" Item. Because Mosen Pedro Màrgarite, servant of their Highnesses, has done good service, and I hope he will do the same henceforward in matters which are intrusted to him, I have been pleased to have him remain here, and also Gaspar and Beltran, because they are recognised servants of their Highnesses, in order to intrust them with matters of confidence. You will specially entreat their Highnesses in regard to the said Mosen Pedro, who is married and has children, to provide him with some charge in the order of Santiago, whose habit he wears, that his wife and children may have the wherewith to live. In the same manner you will relate how well and diligently Juan Aguado, servant of their Highnesses, has rendered service in everything which he has been ordered to do, and that I supplicate their Highnesses to have him and the aforesaid persons in their charge and to reward them.

[" *Their Highnesses order* 30,000 *maravedis to be assigned to Mosen Pedro each year, and to Gaspar and Beltran, to each one,* 15,000 *maravedis each year, from the present, August* 15, 1494 *henceforward : and thus the Admiral shall cause to be paid to them whatever must be paid yonder in the Indies, and Don Juan de Fonseca whatever must be paid here : and in regard to Juan Aguado, their Highnesses will hold him in remembrance.*]

" Item. You will tell their Highnesses of the labour performed by Dr Chanca, confronted with so many invalids, and still more because of the lack of provisions : and nevertheless, he acts with great diligence and charity in everything pertain-

ing to his office. And as their Highnesses referred to me the salary which he was to receive here, because, being here, it is certain that he cannot take or receive anything from anyone, nor earn money by his office as he earned it in Castile, or would be able to earn it being at his ease and living in a different manner from the way he lives here; therefore, notwithstanding he swears that he earned more there, besides the salary which their Highnesses gave him, I did not wish to allow more than 50,000 maravedis each year for the work he performs here while he remains here. This I entreat their Highnesses to order allowed to him with the salary from here, and that, because he says and affirms that all the physicians of their Highnesses who are employed in Royal affairs or things similar to this, are accustomed to have by right one day's wages in all the year from all the people. Nevertheless, I have been informed, and they tell me, that however this may be, the custom is to give them a certain sum, fixed according to the will and command of their Highnesses in compensation for that day's wages. You will entreat their Highnesses to order provision made as well in the matter of the salary as of this custom, in such manner that the said Dr Chanca may have reason to be satisfied.

[" *Their Highnesses are pleased in regard to this matter of Dr Chanca, and that he shall be paid what the Admiral has assigned to him, together with his salary.*

" *In regard to the day's wages of the physicians, they are not accustomed to receive it, save where the King, our Lord, may be in person.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that Coronel is a man for the service of their Highnesses in many things, and how much service he has rendered up to the present in all the most necessary matters, and the need we feel of him now that he is sick; and that rendering service in such a manner, it is reasonable that he should receive the fruit of his service, not only in future favours, but in his present salary, so that he and those who are here may feel that their service profits them; because, so great is the labour which must be performed here in gathering the gold that the persons who are so diligent are not to be held in small consideration; and as, for his skill, he was provided here by me with the office of Alguacil Mayor of these Indies; and since in the provision the salary is left blank,

you will say that I supplicate their Highnesses to order it filled in with as large an amount as they may think right, considering his services, confirming to him the provision I have given him here, and assuring it to him annually.

[" *Their Highnesses order that* 15,000 *maravedis more than his salary shall be assigned him each year, and that it shall be paid to him with his salary.*]

" In the same manner you will tell their Highnesses how the lawyer Gil Garcia came here for Alcalde Mayor and no salary has been named or assigned to him; and he is a capable person, well educated and diligent, and is very necessary here; that I entreat their Highnesses to order his salary named and assigned, so that he can sustain himself, and that it may be paid from the money allowed for salaries here.

[" *Their Highnesses order* 20,000 *maravedis besides his salary assigned to him each year, as long as he remains yonder, and that it shall be paid him when his salary is paid.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses, although it is already written in the letters, that I do not think it will be possible to go to make discoveries this year, until these rivers in which gold is found are placed in the most suitable condition for the service of their Highnesses, as afterwards it can be done much better. Because it is a thing which no one can do without my presence, according to my will or for the service of their Highnesses, however well it may be done, as it is doubtful what will be satisfactory to a man unless he is present.

[" *Let him endeavour that the amount of this gold may be known as precisely as possible.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that the Squires who came from Granada showed good horses in the review which took place at Seville, and afterward at the embarkation I did not see them because I was slightly unwell, and they replaced them with such horses that the best of them do not appear to be worth 2000 maravedis, as they sold the others and bought these; and this was done in the same way to many people as I very well saw yonder, in the reviews at Seville. It appears that Juan de Soria, after he had been given the money

for the wages, for some interest of his own substituted others in place of those I expected to find here, and I found people whom I had never seen. In this matter he was guilty of great wickedness, so that I do not know if I should complain of him alone. On this account, having seen that the expenses of these Squires have been defrayed until now, besides their wages and also wages for their horses, and it is now being done: and they are persons who, when they are sick or when they do not desire to do so, will not allow any use to be made of their horses save by themselves; and their Highnesses do not desire that these horses should be purchased of them, but that they should be used in the service of their Highnesses: and it does not appear to them that they should do anything or render any service except on horseback, which at the present time is not much to the purpose: on this account, it seems that it would be better to buy the horses from them, since they are of so little value, and not have these disagreements with them every day. Therefore their Highnesses may determine this as will best serve them.

[" *Their Highnesses order Don Juan de Fonseca to inform himself in regard to this matter of the horses, and if it shall be found true that this fraud was committed, those persons shall be sent to their Highnesses to be punished: and also he is to inform himself in regard to what is said of the other people, and send the result of the examination to their Highnesses; and in regard to these Squires, their Highnesses command that they remain there and render service, since they belong to the guards and servants of their Highnesses: and their Highnesses order the Squires to give up the horses each time it is necessary and the Admiral orders it, and if the horses receive any injury through others using them, their Highnesses order that the damage shall be paid to them by means of the Admiral.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that more than 200 persons have come here without wages, and there are some of them who render good service. And as it is ordered that the others rendering similar service should be paid: and as for these first three years it would be of great benefit to have 1000 men here to settle, and place this island and the rivers of gold in very great security, and even though there were 100 horsemen nothing would be lost, but rather it seems necessary, although their Highnesses will be able to do without these horsemen

until gold is sent: nevertheless, their Highnesses must send to say whether wages shall be paid to these 200 persons, the same as to the others rendering good service, because they are certainly necessary, as I have said in the beginning of this memorandum.

[" *In regard to these 200 persons, who are here said to have gone without wages, their Highnesses order that they shall take the places of those who went for wages, who have failed or shall fail to fulfil their engagements, if they are skilful and satisfactory to the Admiral. And their Highnesses order the Purser (Contador) to enrol them in place of those who fail to fulfil their engagements, as the Admiral shall instruct him.*]

" Item. As the cost of these people can be in some degree lightened and the better part of the expense could be avoided by the same means employed by other Princes in other places: it appears that it would be well to order brought in the ships, besides the other things which are for the common maintenance and the medicines, shoes and the skins from which to order the shoes made, common shirts and others, jackets, linen, sack-coats, trowsers and cloths suitable for wearing apparel, at reasonable prices: and other things like conserves which are not included in rations, and are for the preservation of health, which things all the people here would willingly receive to apply on their wages: and if these were purchased yonder in Spain by faithful Ministers who would act for the advantage of their Highnesses, something would be saved. Therefore you will learn the will of their Highnesses about this matter, and if it appears to them to be of benefit to them, then it must be placed in operation.

[" *This arrangement is to be in abeyance until the Admiral writes more fully, and at another time they will send to order Don Juan de Fonseca with Jimeno de Bribiesca to make provision for the same.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that inasmuch as yesterday in the review people were found who were without arms, which I think happened in part by that exchange which took place yonder in Seville, or in the harbour when those who presented themselves armed were left, and others were taken who gave something to those who made the exchange, it

seems that it would be well to order 200 cuirasses sent, and 100 muskets and 100 crossbows, and a large quantity of arsenal supplies, which is what we need most, and all these arms can be given to those who are unarmed.

[" *Already Don Juan de Fonseca has been written to make provision for this.*]

" Item. Inasmuch as some artisans who came here, such as masons and other workmen, are married and have wives yonder in Spain, and would like to have what is owing them from their wages given to their wives or to the persons to whom they will send their requirements in order that they may buy for them the things which they need here : I supplicate their Highnesses to order it paid to them, because it is for their benefit to have these persons provided for here.

[" *Their Highnesses have already sent orders to Don Juan de Fonseca to make provision for this matter.*]

" Item. Because, besides the other things which are asked for there according to the memoranda which you are carrying signed by my hand, for the maintenance of the persons in good health as well as for the sick ones, it would be very well to have fifty casks of molasses (miel de azucar) from the island of Madeira, as it is the best sustenance in the world and the most healthful, and it does not usually cost more than two ducats per cask, without the cask : and if their Highnesses order some caravel to stop there in returning, it can be purchased and also ten cases of sugar, which is very necessary ; as this is the best season of the year to obtain it, I say between the present time and the month of April, and to obtain it at a reasonable price. If their Highnesses command it, the order could be given, and it would not be known there for what place it is wanted.

[" *Let Don Juan de Fonseca make provision for this matter.*]

" Item. You will say to their Highnesses that although the rivers contain gold in the quantity related by those who have seen it, yet it is certain that the gold is not engendered in the rivers but rather on the land, the waters of the rivers which flow by the mines bringing it enveloped in the sands : and as

among these rivers which have been discovered there are some very large ones, there are others so small that they are fountains rather than rivers, which are not more than two fingers of water in depth, and then the source from which they spring may be found: for this reason not only labourers to gather it in the sand will be profitable, but others to dig for it in the earth, which will be the most particular operation and produce a great quantity. And for this, it will be well for their Highnesses to send labourers, and from among those who work yonder in Spain in the mines of Almaden, that the work may be done in both ways. Although we will not await them here, as with the labourers we have here we hope, with the aid of God, once the people are in good health, to amass a good quantity of gold to be sent on the first caravels which return.

[" *This will be fully provided for in another manner. In the meantime their Highnesses order Don Juan de Fonseca to send the best miners he can obtain; and to write to Almaden to have the greatest possible number taken from there and sent.*]

" Item. You will entreat their Highnesses very humbly on my part, to consider Villacorta as speedily recommended to them, who, as their Highnesses know, has rendered great service in this business, and with a very good will, and as I know him, he is a diligent person and very devoted to their service: it will be a favour to me if he is given some confidential charge for which he is fitted, and where he can show his desire to serve them and his diligence: and this you will obtain in such a way that Villacorta may know by the result, that what he has done for me when I needed him profits him in this manner.

[" *It will be done thus.*]

" Item. That the said Mosen Pedro and Gaspar and Beltran and others who have remained here gave up the captainship of caravels, which have now returned, and are not receiving wages: but because they are persons who must be employed in important matters and of confidence, their compensation, which must be different from the others, has not been determined. You will entreat their Highnesses on my part to determine what is to be given them each year, or by the month, according to their service.

" Done in the city of Isabella, January 30, 1494.

["*This has already been replied to above, but as it is stated in the said item that they enjoy their salary, from the present time their Highnesses order that their wages shall be paid to all of them from the time they left their captainships.*"]

This document is worth studying, written as it was in circumstances that at one moment looked desperate and at another were all hope. Columbus was struggling manfully with difficulties that were already beginning to be too much for him. His guiding star of faith in some shore beyond the mist and radiance of the West—see into what strange places and to what strange occupations it has led him! The blue, visionary eyes, given to seeing things immediately beyond the present horizon, must fix themselves on accounts and requisitions, on the needs of idle, aristocratic, grumbling Spaniards; must fix themselves also on that blank void in the bellies of his returning ships, where the gold ought to have been. The letter has its practical side; the requisitions are made with good sense and a grasp of the economic situation; but they have a deeper significance than that. All this talk about little ewe lambs, wine and bacon (better than the last lot, if it pleases your Highnesses), little yearling calves, and fifty casks of molasses that can be bought a ducat or two cheaper in Madeira in the months of April and May than at any other time or place, is only half real. Columbus fills his Sovereigns' ears with this clamour so that he shall not hear those embarrassing questions that will inevitably be asked about the gold and the spices. He boldly begins his letter with the old story about "indications of spices" and gold "in incredible quantities," with a great deal of "moreover" and "besides," and a bold, pompous, pathetic "I will undertake"; and then he gets away from that subject by wordy deviations, so that to one reading his letter it really might seem as though the true business of the expedition was to provide Coronel, Mosen Pedro, Gaspar, Beltran, Gil Garcia, and the rest of them with work and wages. Everything that occurs to him, great or little, that makes it seem as though things were humming in the new settlement, he stuffs into this document, shovelling words into the empty hulls of the ships, and trying to fill those bottomless pits with a stream of talk. A system of slavery is boldly and bluntly sketched; the writer, in the hurry and stress of the moment, giving to its economic advantages rather greater prominence than to its religious glories. The

memorandum, for all its courageous attempt to be very cool and orderly and practical, gives us, if ever a human document did, a picture of a man struggling with an impossible situation which he will not squarely face, like one who should try to dig up the seashore and keep his eyes shut the while.

In the royal comments written against the document one seems to trace the hand of Isabella rather than of Ferdinand. Their tone is matter-of-fact, cool, and comforting, like the coolness of a woman's hand placed on a feverish brow. Isabella believed in him; perhaps she read between the lines of this document, and saw, as we can see, how much anxiety and distress were written there; and her comments are steadying and encouraging. He has done well; what he asks is being attended to; their Highnesses are well informed in regard to this and that matter; suitable provision will be made for everything; *but let him endeavour that the amount of this gold may be known as precisely as possible.*

There is indeed no escaping from that. The Admiral (no one knows it better than himself) must make good his dazzling promises, and coin every boastful word into a golden *excelente* of Spain. Alas! he must no longer write about the lush grasses, the shining rivers, the brightly coloured parrots, the gaudy flies and insects, the little singing birds, and the nights that are like May in Cordova. He must find out about the gold; for it has come to grim business in the Earthly Paradise.

BOOK III

DESPERATE REMEDIES

CHAPTER I

THE VOYAGE TO CUBA

THE sight of the greater part of their fleet disappearing in the direction of home threw back the unstable Spanish colony into doubt and despondency. The brief encouragement afforded by Ojeda's report soon died away, and the actual discomforts of life in Isabella were more important than visionary luxuries that seemed to recede into the distance with the vanishing ships. The food supply was the cause of much discomfort; the jobbery and dishonesty which seem inseparable from the fitting out of a large expedition had stored the ships with bad wine and imperfectly cured provisions; and these combined with the unhealthy climate to produce a good deal of sickness. The feeling against Columbus, never far below the Spanish surface, began to express itself definitely in treacherous consultations and plots; and these were fomented by Bernal Diaz, the comptroller of the colony, who had access to Columbus's papers and had seen the letter sent by him to Spain. Columbus was at this time prostrated by an attack of fever, and Diaz took the opportunity to work the growing discontent up to the point of action. He told the colonists that Columbus had painted their condition in far too favourable terms; that he was deceiving them as well as the Sovereigns; and a plot was hatched to seize the ships that remained and sail for home, leaving Columbus behind to enjoy the riches that he had falsely boasted about. They were ready to take alarm at anything, and to believe anything one way or the other; and as they had believed Ojeda when he came back with his report of riches, now they believed Cado, the assayer, who said that even such gold as had been found was of a very poor and worthless quality. The mutiny developed fast; and a table of charges against Columbus, which was to be produced in Spain as a justification for it, had actually been drawn up, when the Admiral, recovering from his illness, discovered what was on foot. He dealt promptly and firmly with it in his quarter-deck manner, which was always far more effective than his viceregal

manner. Diaz was imprisoned and lodged in chains on board one of the ships, to be sent to Spain for trial; and the other ringleaders were punished also according to their deserts. The guns and ammunition were all stored together on one ship under a safe guard, and the mutiny was stamped out. But the Spaniards did not love Columbus any the better for it; did not any the more easily forgive him for being in command of them and for being a foreigner.

But it would never do for the colony to stagnate in Isabella, and Columbus decided to make a serious attempt, not merely to discover the gold of Cibao, but to get it. He therefore organised a military expedition of about 400 men, including artificers, miners, and carriers, with the little cavalry force that had been brought out from Spain. Every one who had armour wore it, flags and banners were carried, drums and trumpets were sounded; the horses were decked out in rich caparisons, and as glittering and formidable a show was made as possible. Leaving his brother James in command of the settlement, Columbus set out on the 12th of March to the interior of the island. Through the forest and up the mountain-side a road was cut by pioneers from among the aristocratic adventurers who had come with the party; which road, the first made in the New World, was called *El puerto de los Hidalgos*. The formidable, glittering cavalcade inspired the natives with terror and amazement; they had never seen horses before, and when one of the soldiers dismounted it seemed to them as though some terrifying two-headed, six-limbed beast had come asunder. What with their fright of the horses and their desire to possess the trinkets that were carried, they were very friendly and hospitable, and supplied the expedition with plenty of food. At last, after passing mountain ranges that made their hearts faint, and rich valleys that made them hopeful again, the explorers came to the mountains of Cibao, and passing over the first range found themselves in a little valley at the foot of the hills where a river wound round a fertile plain and there was ample accommodation for an encampment. There were the usual signs of gold, and Columbus saw in the brightly coloured stones of the river-bed evidence of unbounded wealth in precious stones. At last he had come to the place! He who had doubted so much, and whose faith had wavered, had now been led to a place where he could touch and handle the gold and jewels of

his desire; and he therefore called the place Saint Thomas. He built a fort here, leaving a garrison of fifty-six men under the command of Pedro Margarite to collect gold from the natives, and himself returned to Isabella, which he reached at the end of March.

Enforced absence from the thing he has organised is a great test of efficiency in any man. The world is full of men who can do things themselves; but those who can organise from the industry of their men a machine which will steadily perform the work whether the organiser is absent or present are rare indeed. Columbus was one of the first class. His own power and personality generally gave him some kind of mastery over any circumstances in which he was immediately concerned; but let him be absent for a little time and his organisation went to pieces. No one was better than he at conducting a one-man concern; and his conduct of the first voyage, so long as he had his company under his immediate command, was a model of efficiency. But when the material under his command began to grow and to be divided into groups, his life became a succession of ups and downs. While he was settling and disciplining one group, mutiny and disorder would attack the other; and when he went to attend to them, the first one immediately fell into confusion again. He dealt with the discontent in Isabella, organising the better-disposed part of it in productive labour, and himself marching the malcontents into something like discipline and order, leaving them at Saint Thomas, as we have seen, usefully collecting gold. But while he was away the people at Isabella had got themselves into trouble again, and when he arrived there on the morning of March 29 he found the town in a deplorable condition. The lake beside which the city had been built, and which seemed so attractive and healthy a spot, turned out to be nothing better than a fever trap. Drained from the malarial marshes, its sickly exhalations soon produced an epidemic that incapacitated more than half the colony and interrupted the building operations. The time of those who were well was entirely occupied with the care of those who were sick, and all productive work was at a standstill. The reeking virgin soil had produced crops in an incredibly short time, and the sowings of January were ready for reaping in the beginning of April. But there was no one to reap them, and the further cultivation of the ground had necessarily been neglected.

The faint-hearted Spaniards, who never could meet any trouble without grumbling, were now in the depths of despair and angry discontent; and it had not pleased them to be put on a short allowance of even the unwholesome provisions that remained from the original store. A couple of rude hand-mills had been erected for the making of flour; and as food was the first necessity, Columbus immediately put all the able-bodied men in the colony, whatever their rank, to the elementary manual work of grinding. Friar Buil and the twelve Benedictine brothers who were with him thought this a wise order, assuming of course that as clerics they would not be asked to work. But great was their astonishment, and loud and angry their criticism of the Admiral, when they found that they also were obliged to labour with their hands. But Columbus was firm; there were absolutely no exceptions made; hidalgo and priest had to work alongside of sailor and labourer; and the curses of the living mingled with those of the dying on the man whose boastful words had brought them to such a place and such a condition.

It was only in the nature of things that news should now arrive of trouble at Saint Thomas. Gold and women again; instead of bartering or digging, the Spaniards had been stealing; and discipline had been relaxed, with the usual disastrous results with regard to the women of the adjacent native tribes. Pedro Màrgarite sent a nervous message to Columbus expressing his fear that Caonabo, the native king, should be exasperated to the point of attacking them again. Columbus therefore despatched Ojeda in command of a force of 350 armed men to Saint Thomas with instructions that he was to take over the command of that post, while Màrgarite was to take out an expedition in search of Caonabo, whom, with his brothers, Màrgarite was instructed to capture at all costs.

Having thus set things going in the interior, and once more restored Isabella to something like order, he decided to take three ships and attempt to discover the coast of Cathay. The old *Niña*, the *San Juan*, and the *Cordera*, three small caravels, were provisioned for six months and manned by a company of fifty-two men. Francisco Niño went once more with the Admiral as pilot, and the faithful Juan de la Cosa was taken to draw charts; one of the monks also, to act as chaplain. The Admiral had a steward, a secretary, ten seamen, and six boys to complete the company on the *Niña*. The *San Juan* was commanded by Alonso Perez Roldan and the *Cordera* by Christoval

Niño. James was again left in command of the colony, with four counsellors, Friar Buil, Fernandez Coronel, Alonso Sanchez Carvajal, and Juan de Luxan, to assist his authority.

The Admiral sailed on April 24, steering to the westward and touching at La Navidad before he bore away to the island of Cuba, the southern shore of which it was now his intention to explore. At one of his first anchorages he discovered a native feast going on, and when the boats from his ships pulled ashore the feasters fled in terror—the hungry Spaniards finishing their meal for them. Presently, however, the feasters were induced to come back, and Columbus with soft speeches made them a compensation for the food that had been taken, and produced a favourable impression, as his habit was; with the result that all along the coast he was kindly received by the natives, who supplied him with food and fresh fruit in return for trinkets. At the harbour now known as Santiago de Cuba, where he anchored on May 2, he had what seemed like authentic information of a great island to the southward which was alleged to be the source of all the gold. The very compasses of Columbus's ships seem by this time to have become demagnetised, and to have pointed only to gold; for no sooner had he heard this report than he bore away to the south in pursuit of that faint yellow glitter that had now quite taken the place of the original inner light of faith.

The low coast of Jamaica, hazy and blue at first, but afterwards warming into a golden belt crowned by the paler and deeper greens of the foliage, was sighted first by Columbus on Sunday, May 4; and he anchored the next day in the beautiful harbour of Saint Anne, to which he gave the name of Santa Gloria. To the island itself he gave the name of Santiago, which however has never displaced its native name of Jamaica. The dim blue mountains and clumps of lofty trees about the bay were wonderful even to Columbus, whose eyes must by this time have been growing accustomed to the beauty of the West Indies, and he lost his heart to Jamaica from the first moment that his eyes rested on its green and golden shores. Perhaps he was by this time a little out of conceit with Hayti; but be that as it may he retracted all the superlatives he had ever used for the other lands of his discovery, and bestowed them in his heart upon Jamaica.

He was not humanly so well received as he had been on the

other islands, for when he cast anchor the natives came out in canoes threatening hostilities, and had to be appeased with red caps and hawks' bells. Next day, however, Columbus wished to careen his ships, and sailed a little to the west until he found a suitable beach, which he called Puerto Bueno; and as he approached the shore some large canoes filled with painted and feathered warriors came out and attacked his ships, showering arrows and javelins, and whooping and screaming at the Spaniards. The guns were discharged, and an armed party sent ashore in a boat, and the natives were soon put to flight. There was no renewal of hostilities; the next day the local *cacique* came down offering provisions and help; presents were exchanged and cordial relations established. Columbus noticed that the Jamaicans seemed to be a much more virile community than either the Cubans or the people of Española. They had enormous canoes hollowed out of single mahogany-trees, some of them 96 feet long and 8 feet broad, which they handled with the greatest ease and dexterity; they had a merry way with them too, were quick of apprehension and clever at expressing their meaning, and in their domestic utensils and implements they showed an advance in civilisation on the other islanders of the group. Columbus did some trade with the islanders as he sailed along the coast, but he does not seem to have believed much in the gold story, for after sailing to the western point of the island he bore away to the north again, and sighted the coast of Cuba on the 18th of May.

The reason why Columbus kept returning to the coast of Cuba was that he believed it to be the mainland of Asia. The unlettered natives, who had never read Marco Polo, told him that it was an island, although no man had ever seen the end of it; but Columbus did not believe them, and sailed westward in the belief that he would presently come upon the country and city of Cathay. Soon he found himself in the wonderful labyrinth of islets and sandbanks that lies off the south coast; and because of the wonderful colours of their flowers and climbing plants he called them *Jardin de la Reina*, or Queen's Garden. Dangerous as the navigation through these islands was, he preferred to risk the shoals and sandbanks rather than round them out at sea to the southward, for he believed them to be the islands which, according to Marco Polo, lay in masses along the coast of Cathay. In this adventure he had a very hard time

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minably west and south-west,
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He called his secretary t
form of oath or testament,[1]
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ng (June 12, 1494) was the main-
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[1] Appendix E.

he might be pardoned for regarding as insuperable to a less skilful mariner, that any one should ever come that way again; even he himself said that he would never risk his life again in such a place. He wished his journey, therefore, not to have been made in vain; and as he himself believed that he had stood on the mainland of Asia, he took care to take back with him the only kind of evidence that was possible—namely, the sworn affidavits of the ship's crews.

Perhaps in his madness he would really have gone on and tried to reach the Golden Chersonesus of Ptolemy, which according to Marco Polo lay just beyond, and so to steer homeward round Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope; in which case he would either have been lost or would have discovered Mexico. The crews, however, would not hear of the voyage being continued westward. The ships were leaking and the salt water was spoiling the already doubtful provisions, and he was forced to turn back. He stood to the south-east, and reached the Isle of Pines, to which he gave the name of Evangelista, where the water-casks were filled, and from there he tried to sail back to the east. But he found himself surrounded by islands and banks in every direction, which made any straight course impossible. He sailed south and east and west and north, and found himself always back again in the middle of this charmed group of islands. He spent almost a month trying to escape from them, and once his ship went ashore on a sandbank and was only warped off with the greatest difficulty. On July 7 he was back again in the region of the "Queen's Gardens," from which he stood across to the coast of Cuba.

He anchored and landed there, and being in great distress and difficulty he had a large cross erected on the mainland, and had mass said. When the Spaniards rose from their knees they saw an old native man observing them; and the old man came and sat down beside Columbus and talked to him through the interpreter. He told him that he had been in Jamaica and Española as well as in Cuba, and that the coming of the Spaniards had caused great distress to the people of the islands.

He then spoke to Columbus about religion, and the gist of what he said was something like this: "The performance of your worship seems good to me. You believe that this life is not everything; so do we; and I know that when this life is over

there are two places reserved for me, to one of which I shall certainly go; one happy and beautiful, one dreadful and miserable. Joy and kindness reign in the one place, which is good enough for the best of men; and they will go there who while they have lived on the earth have loved peace and goodness, and who have never robbed or killed or been unkind. The other place is evil and full of shadows, and is reserved for those who disturb and hurt the sons of men; how important it is, therefore, that one should do no evil or injury in this world!"

Columbus replied with a brief statement of his own theological views, and added that he had been sent to find out if there were any persons in those islands who did evil to others, such as the Caribs or cannibals, and that if so he had come to punish them. The effect of this ingenuous speech was heightened by a gift of hawks' bells and pieces of broken glass; upon receiving which the good old man fell down on his knees, and said that the Spaniards must surely have come from heaven.

A few days later the voyage to the south-east was resumed, and some progress was made along the coast. But contrary winds arose which made it impossible for the ships to round Cape Cruz, and Columbus decided to employ the time of waiting in completing his explorations in Jamaica. He therefore sailed due south until he once more sighted the beautiful northern coast of that island, following it to the west and landing, as his custom was, whenever he saw a good harbour or anchorage. The wind was still from the east, and he spent a month beating to the eastward along the south coast of the island, fascinated by its beauty, and willing to stay and explore it, but prevented by the discontent of his crews, who were only anxious to get back to Española. He had friendly interviews with many of the natives of Jamaica, and at almost the last harbour at which he touched a *cacique* with his wife and family and complete retinue came off in canoes to the ship, begging Columbus to take him and his household back to Spain.

Columbus considers this family, and thinks wistfully how well they would look in Barcelona. The father dressed in a cap of gold and green jewels, necklace and earrings of the same; the mother decked out in similar regalia, with the addition of a small cotton apron; two sons and five brothers dressed principally in a feather or two; two daughters mother-naked, except that the elder, a handsome girl of eighteen, wears a jewelled

girdle from which depends a tablet as big as an ivy leaf, made of various coloured stones embroidered on cotton. What an exhibit for one of the triumphal processions: "Native royal family, complete!" But Columbus thinks also of the scarcity of provisions on board his ships, and wonders how all these royalties would like to live on a pint of sour wine and a rotten biscuit each per day. Alas! there is not sour wine and rotten biscuit enough for his own people; it is still a long way to Española; and he is obliged to make polite excuses, and to say that he will come back for his majesty another time.

It was on the 20th of August that Columbus, having the day before seen the last of the dim blue hills of Jamaica, sighted again the long peninsula of Hayti, called by him Cape San Miguel, but known to us as Cape Tiburon; although it was not until he was hailed by a *cacique* who called out to him "*Almirante, Almirante*" that the sea-worn mariners realised with joy that the island must be Española. But they were a long way from Isabella yet. They sailed along the south coast, meeting contrary winds, and at one point landing nine men who were to cross the island, and try to reach Isabella by land. Week followed week, and they made very poor progress. In the beginning of September they were caught in a severe tempest, which separated the ships for a time, and held the Admiral weather-bound for eight days. There was an eclipse of the moon during this period, and he took advantage of it to make an observation for longitude, by which he found himself to be 5 h. 23 m., or 80° 40′, west of Cadiz. In this observation there is an error of eighteen degrees, the true longitude of the island of Saona, where the observation was taken, being 62° 20′ west of Cadiz; and the error is accounted for partly by the inaccuracy of the tables of Regiomontanus and partly by the crudity and inexactness of the Admiral's methods. On the 24th of September they at last reached the easternmost point of Española, named by Columbus San Rafael. They stood to the east a little longer, and discovered the little island of Mona, which lies between Española and Puerto Rico; and from thence shaped their course west-by-north for Isabella. And no sooner had the course been set for home than the Admiral suddenly and completely collapsed, was carried unconscious to his cabin, and lay there in such extremity that his companions gave him up for lost.

It is no ordinary strain to which Christopher Columbus has succumbed. He has been five months at sea, sharing with the common sailors their bad food and weary vigils, but bearing alone on his own shoulders a weight of anxiety of which they knew nothing. Watch has relieved watch on his ships, but there has been no one to relieve him, or to lift the burden from his mind. The eyes of a nation are upon him, watchful and jealous eyes that will not forgive him any failure; and to earn their approval he has taken this voyage of five months, during which he has only been able to forget his troubles in the brief hours of slumber. Strange uncharted seas, treacherous winds and currents, drenching surges have all done their part in bringing him to this pass; and his body, now starved on rotten biscuits, now glutted with unfamiliar fruits, has been preyed upon by the tortured mind, as the mind itself has been shaken and loosened by the weakness of the body. He lies there in his cabin in a deep stupor; memory, sight, and all sensation completely gone from him; dead but for the heart that beats on faintly, and the breath that comes and goes through the parted lips. Niño, de la Cosa, and the others come and look at him, shake their heads, and go away again. There is nothing to be done; perhaps they will get him back to Isabella in time to bury him there; perhaps not.

And meanwhile they are back again in calm and safe waters, and coasting a familiar shore; and the faithful little *Niña*, shaking out her wings in the sunny breezes, trips under the guidance of unfamiliar hands towards her moorings in the Bay of Isabella. It is a sad company that she carries; for in the cabin, deaf and blind and unconscious, there lies the heart and guiding spirit of the New World. He does not hear the talking of the waters past the *Niña's* timbers; does not hear the stamping on the deck and shortening of sail and unstopping of cables and getting out of gear; does not hear the splash of the anchor, nor the screams of birds that rise circling from the shore; does not hear the greetings and the news; does not see bending over him a kind, helpful, and well-beloved face. He sees and hears and knows nothing; and in that state of rest and absence from the body they carry him, still living and breathing, ashore.

CHAPTER II

THE CONQUEST OF ESPAÑOLA

WE must now go back five months, to the time when Columbus, having made what arrangements he could for the safety of Española, left it under the charge of his brother James. Ojeda had duly marched into the interior and taken over the command of Fort St Thomas, thus setting free Màrgarite, according to his instructions, to lead an expedition for purposes of reconnoitre and demonstration through the island. These, at any rate, were Màrgarite's orders, duly communicated to him by Ojeda; but Màrgarite will have none of them. Well born, well educated, well bred, he ought at least to have the spirit to carry out orders so agreeable to a gentleman of adventure; but unfortunately, although Màrgarite is a gentleman by birth, he is a low and dishonest dog by nature. He cannot take the decent course, cannot even play the man, and take his share in the military work of the colony. Instead of cutting paths through the forest, and exhibiting his military strength in an orderly and proper way as the Admiral intended he should, he marches forth from St Thomas, on hearing that Columbus has sailed away, and encamps no farther off than the Vega Real, that pleasant place of green valleys and groves and murmuring rivers. He encamps there, takes up his quarters there, will not budge from there for any Admiral; and as for James Columbus and his counsellors, they may go to the devil for all Màrgarite cares. One of them at least, he knows—Friar Buïl—is not such a fool as to sit down under the command of that solemn-faced, uncouth young man from Genoa; and doubtless when he is tired of the Vega Real he and Buïl can arrange something between them. In the meantime, here is a very beautiful sunshiny place, abounding in all kinds of provisions; food for more than one kind of appetite, as he has noticed when he has thrust his rude way into the native houses and seen the shapely daughters of the islanders. He has a little army of soldiers to forage for him; they can get him food and gold, and they are useful also in those other marauding expedi-

tions designed to replenish the *seraglio* that he has established in his camp; and if they like to do a little marauding and woman-stealing on their own account, it is no affair of his, and may keep the devils in a good temper. Thus Don Pedro Màrgarite to himself.

The peaceable and gentle natives soon began to resent these gross doings. To robbery succeeded outrage, and to outrage murder—all three committed in the very houses of the natives; and they began to murmur, to withhold that good-will which the Spaniards had so sorely tried, and to develop a threatening attitude that was soon communicated to the natives in the vicinity of Isabella, and came under the notice of James Columbus and his council. Grave, bookish, wool-weaving young James, not used to military affairs, and not at all comfortable in his command, can think of no other expedient than to write a letter to Màrgarite remonstrating with him for his licentious excesses and reminding him of the Admiral's instructions, which were being neglected.

Màrgarite receives the letter and reads it with a contemptuous laugh. He is not going to be ordered about by a family of Italian wool-weavers, and the only change in his conduct is that he becomes more and more careless and impudent, extending the area of his lawless operations, and making frequent visits to Isabella itself, swaggering under the very nose of solemn James, and soon deep in consultation with Friar Buïl.

At this moment, that is to say very soon after the departure of Christopher on his voyage to Cuba and Jamaica, three ships dropped anchor in the Bay of Isabella. They were laden with the much-needed supplies from Spain, and had been sent out under the command of Bartholomew Columbus. It will be remembered that when Christopher reached Spain after his first voyage one of his first cares had been to write to Bartholomew, asking him to join him. The letter, doubtless after many wanderings, had found Bartholomew in France at the Court of Charles VIII., by whom he was held in some esteem; in fact it was Charles who provided him with the necessary money for his journey to Spain, for Bartholomew had not greatly prospered, in spite of his voyage with Diaz to the Cape of Good Hope and of his having been in England making exploration proposals at the Court of Henry VII. He had arrived in Spain after Columbus had sailed again, and had presented himself at Court with his two nephews, Ferdinand and Diego, both of whom were now in the service of Prince Juan as pages. Ferdin-

and and Isabella seem to have received Bartholomew kindly. They liked this capable navigator, who had much of Christopher's charm of manner, and was more a man of the world than he. Much more practical also; Ferdinand would be sure to like him better than he liked Christopher, whose pompous manner and long-winded speeches bored him. Bartholomew was quick, alert, decisive, and practical; he was an accomplished navigator—almost as accomplished as Columbus, as it appeared. He was offered the command of the three ships which were being prepared to go to Española with supplies; and he duly arrived there after a prosperous voyage. It will be remembered that Christopher had, so far as we know, kept the secret of the road to the new islands; and Bartholomew can have had nothing more to guide him than a rough chart showing the islands in a certain latitude, and the distance to be run towards them by dead-reckoning. That he should have made an exact landfall and sailed into the Bay of Isabella, never having been there before, was a certificate of the highest skill in navigation.

Unfortunately it was James who was in charge of the colony; Bartholomew had no authority, for once his ships had arrived in port his mission was accomplished until Christopher should return and find him employment. He was therefore forced to sit still and watch his young brother struggling with the unruly Spaniards. His presence, however, was a further exasperation to the malcontents. There existed in Isabella a little faction of some of the aristocrats who had never forgiven Columbus for employing them in degrading manual labour; who had never forgiven him in fact for being there at all, and in command over them. And now here was another wool-weaver, or son of a wool-weaver, come to put his finger in the pie that Christopher has apparently provided so carefully for himself and his family.

Màrgarite and Buïl and some others, treacherous scoundrels all of them, but clannish to their own race and class, decide that they will put up with it no longer; they are tired of Española in any case, and Màrgarite, from too free indulgence in illicit pleasures, has contracted an unpleasant disease, and thinks that a sea voyage and the attentions of a Spanish doctor will be good for him. It is easy for them to put their plot into execution. There are the ships; there is nothing for them to do but take a couple of them, provision them, and set sail for Spain, where they trust to their own influence, and the story they will be able to tell of the falseness of the Admiral's promises,

to excuse their breach of discipline. And sail they do, snapping their fingers at the wool-weavers.

James and Bartholomew were perhaps glad to be rid of them, but their relief was tempered with anxiety as to the result on Christopher's reputation and favour when the malcontents should have made their false representations at Court. The brothers were powerless to do anything in that matter, however, and the state of affairs in Española demanded their close attention. Màrgarite's little army, finding itself without even the uncertain restraint of its commander, now openly mutinied and abandoned itself to the wildest excesses. It became scattered and disbanded, and little groups of soldiers went wandering about the country, robbing and outraging and carrying cruelty and oppression among the natives. Long-suffering as these were, and patiently as they bore with the unspeakable barbarities of the Spanish soldiers, there came a point beyond which their forbearance would not go. An aching spirit of unforgiveness and revenge took the place of their former gentleness and compliance; and here and there, when the Spaniards were more brutal and less cautious than was their brutal and incautious habit, the natives fell upon them and took swift and bloody revenge. Small parties found themselves besieged and put to death: whole villages, whose hospitality had been abused, cut off wandering groups of the marauders and burned the houses where they lodged. The disaffection spread; and Caonabo, who had never abated his resentment at the Spanish intrusion into the island, thought the time had come to make another demonstration of native power.

Fortunately for the Spaniards his object was the fort of St Thomas, commanded by the alert Ojeda; and this young man, who was not easily to be caught napping, had timely intelligence of his intention. When Caonabo, mustering ten thousand men, suddenly surrounded the fort and prepared to attack it, he found the fifty Spaniards of the garrison more than ready for him, and his naked savages dared not advance within the range of the cross-bows and arquebuses. Caonabo tried to besiege the station, watching every gorge and road through which supplies could reach it, but Ojeda made sallies and raids upon the native force, under which it became thinned and discouraged; and Caonabo had finally to withdraw to his own territory.

But he was not yet beaten. He decided upon another and

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Course plotted from Sir Clements Markham's "Christopher Columbus."

much larger enterprise, which was to induce the other *caciques* of the island to co-operate with him in an attack upon Isabella, the population of which he knew would have been much thinned and weakened by disease. The island was divided into five native provinces. The north-eastern part, named Marien, was under the rule of Guacanagari, whose headquarters were near the abandoned La Navidad. The remaining eastern part of the island, called Higuay, was under a chief named Cotabanama. The western province was Xaragua, governed by one Behechio, whose sister, Anacaona, was the wife of Caonabo. The middle of the island was divided into two provinces—that which extended from the northern coast to the Cibao mountains and included the Vega Real being governed by Guarionex, and that which extended from the Cibao mountains to the south being governed by Caonabo. All these rulers were more or less embittered by the outrages and cruelties of the Spaniards, and all agreed to join with Caonabo except Guacanagari. That loyal soul, so faithful to what he knew of good, shocked and distressed as he was by outrages from which his own people had suffered no less than the others, could not bring himself to commit what he regarded as a breach of the laws of hospitality. It was upon his shores that Columbus had first landed; and although it was his own country and his own people whose wrongs were to be avenged, he could not bring himself to turn traitor to the grave Admiral with whom, in those happy days of the past, he had enjoyed so much pleasant intercourse. His refusal to co-operate delayed the plan of Caonabo, who directed the island coalition against Guacanagari himself in order to bring him to reason. He was attacked by the neighbouring chiefs; one of his wives was killed and another captured; but still he would not swerve from his ideal of conduct.

The first thing that Columbus recognised when he opened his eyes after his long period of lethargy and insensibility was the face of his brother Bartholomew bending over him where he lay in bed in his own house at Española. Nothing could have been more welcome to him, sick, lonely, and discouraged as he was, than the presence of that strong, helpful brother; and from the time when Bartholomew's friendly face first greeted him he began to get better. His first act, as soon as he was strong enough to sign a paper, was to appoint Bartholomew to the office of Adelantado, or Lieutenant-Governor—an in-

discreet and rather tactless proceeding which, although it was not outside his power as a bearer of the royal seal, was afterwards resented by King Ferdinand as a piece of impudent encroachment upon the royal prerogative. But Columbus was unable to transact business himself, and James was manifestly of little use; the action was natural enough.

In the early days of his convalescence he had another pleasant experience, in the shape of a visit from Guacanagari, who came to express his concern at the Admiral's illness, and to tell him the story of what had been going on in his absence. The gentle creature referred again with tears to the massacre at La Navidad, and again asserted that innocence of any hand in it which Columbus had happily never doubted; and he told him also of the secret league against Isabella, of his own refusal to join it, and of the attacks to which he had consequently been subjected. It must have been an affecting meeting for these two, who represented the first friendship formed between the Old World and the New, who were both of them destined to suffer in the impact of civilisation and savagery, and whose names and characters were happily destined to survive that impact, and to triumph over the oblivion of centuries.

So long as the native population remained hostile and unconquered by kindness or force, it was impossible to work securely at the development of the colony; and Columbus, however regretfully, had come to feel that circumstances more or less obliged him to use force. At first he did not quite realise the gravity of the position, and attempted to conquer or reconcile the natives in little groups. Guarionex, the *cacique* of the Vega Real, was by gifts and smooth words soothed back into a friendship which was consolidated by the marriage of his daughter with Columbus's native interpreter. It was useless, however, to try and make friends with Caonabo, that fierce irreconcilable; and it was felt that only by stratagem could he be secured. No sooner was this suggested than Ojeda volunteered for the service. Amid the somewhat slow-moving figures of our story this man appears as lively as a flea; and he dances across our pages in a sensation of intrepid feats of arms that make his great popularity among the Spaniards easily credible to us. He did not know what fear was; he was always ready for a fight of any kind; a quarrel in the streets of Madrid, a duel, a fight with a man or a wild beast, a brawl in a tavern or a

military expedition, were all the same to him, if only they gave him an opportunity for fighting. He had a little picture of the Virgin hung round his neck, by which he swore, and to which he prayed; he had never been so much as scratched in all his affrays, and he believed that he led a charmed life. Who would go out against Caonabo, the Goliath of the island? He, little David Ojeda, he would go out and undertake to fetch the giant back with him; and all he wanted was ten men, a pair of handcuffs, a handful of trinkets, horses for the whole of his company, and his little image or picture of the Virgin.

Columbus may have smiled at this proposal, but he knew his man; and Ojeda duly departed with his horses and his ten men. Plunging into the forest, he made his way through sixty leagues of dense undergrowth until he arrived in the very heart of Caonabo's territory and presented himself at the chief's house. The chief was at home, and, not unimpressed by the valour of Ojeda, who represented himself as coming on a friendly mission, received him under conditions of truce. He had an eye for military prowess, this Caonabo, and something of the lion's heart in him; he recognised in Ojeda the little man who kept him so long at bay outside Fort St Thomas; and, after the manner of lion-hearted people, liked him none the worse for that.

Ojeda proposed that the King should accompany him to Isabella to make peace. No, said Caonabo. Then Ojeda tried another way. There was a poetical side to the big fighting savage, and often in more friendly days, when the bell in the little chapel of Isabella had been ringing for Vespers, the *cacique* had been observed sitting alone on some hill listening, enchanted by the strange silver voice that floated to him across the sunset. The bell had indeed become something of a personality in the island: all the neighbouring savages listened to its voice with awe and fascination, pausing with inclined heads whenever it began to speak from its turret.

Ojeda talks to Caonabo about the bell, and tells him what a wonderful thing it is; tells him also that if he will come with him to Isabella he shall have the bell for a present. Poetry and public policy struggled together in Caonabo's heart, but poetry wins; the great powerful savage, urged thereto by his childish lion-heart, will come to Isabella if they will give him the bell. He sets forth, accompanied by a native retinue, and by Ojeda and his ten horsemen. Presently they come to a river and Ojeda produces his bright manacles; tells the King that they are royal

ornaments and that he has been instructed to bestow them upon Caonabo as a sign of honour. But first he must come alone to the river and bathe; which he does. Then he must sit with Ojeda upon his horse; which he does. Then he must have fitted on to him the shining silver trinkets; which he does, the great grinning giant, pleased with his toys. Then, to show him what it is like to be on a horse, Ojeda canters gently round in widening and ever-widening circles; a turn of his spurred heels, and the canter becomes a gallop, the circle becomes a straight line, and Caonabo is on the road to Isabella. When they are wel beyond the reach of the natives they pause and tie Caonab securely into his place; and by this treachery bring him int Isabella, where he is imprisoned in the Admiral's house.

The sulky giant, brought thus into captivity, refuses to ben his proud, stubborn heart into even a form of submission. H takes no notice of Columbus, and pays him no honour, althoug honour is paid to himself as a captive king. He sits there behin his bars gnawing his fingers, listening to the voice of the bell tha has lured him into captivity, and thinking of the free, open li which he is to know no more. Though he will pay no deferen to the Admiral, will not even rise when he enters his presence there is one person he holds in honour, and that is Ojeda. H will not rise when the Admiral comes; but when Ojeda comes small as he is, and without external state, the chief makes hi obeisance to him. The Admiral he sets at defiance, and boast of his destruction of La Navidad, and of his plan to destro Isabella; Ojeda he respects and holds in honour, as being th only man in the island brave enough to come into his hou and carry him off a captive. . . . There was a good deal of th sportsman in Caonabo.

The immediate result of the capture of Caonabo was t rouse the islanders to further hostilities, and one of the brothe of the captive king led a force of seven thousand men to t vicinity of St Thomas, to which Ojeda, however, had in t meantime returned. His small force was augmented by so men despatched by Bartholomew Columbus on receipt of an urgent message; and in command of this force Ojeda sallied forth against the natives and attacked them furiously on horse and on foot, killing a great part of them, taking others prisoner, and putting the rest to flight. This was the beginning of the end of the island resistance. A month or two later, when Columbus

was better, he and Bartholomew together mustered the whole of their available army and marched out in search of the native force, which he knew had been rallied and greatly augmented.

The two forces met near the present town of Santiago, in the plain known as the Savanna of Matanza. The Spanish force was divided into three main divisions, under the command of Christopher and Bartholomew Columbus and Ojeda respectively. These three divisions attacked the Indians simultaneously from different points, Ojeda throwing his cavalry upon them, riding them down, and cutting them to pieces. Drums were beaten and trumpets blown; the guns were fired from the cover of the trees; and a pack of bloodhounds, which had been sent out from Spain with Bartholomew, were let loose upon the natives and tore their bodies to pieces. It was an easy and horrible victory. The native force was estimated by Columbus at one hundred thousand men, although we shall probably be nearer the mark if we reduce that estimate by one-half.

The powers of hell were let loose that day into the Earthly Paradise. The guns mowed red lines of blood through the solid ranks of the natives; the great Spanish horses trod upon and crushed their writhing bodies, in which arrows and lances continually stuck and quivered; and the ferocious dogs, barking and growling, seized the naked Indians by the throat, dragged them to the ground, and tore out their very entrails. . . . Well for us that the horrible noises of that day are silent now; well for the world that the place of bloodshed and horror has grown green again; better for us and for the world if those cries had never been heard, and that quiet place had never received a stain that centuries of green succeeding springtides can never wash away.

It was some time before this final battle that the convalescence of the Admiral was further assisted by the arrival of four ships commanded by Antonio Torres, who must have passed, out of sight and somewhere on the high seas, the ships bearing Buil and Margarite back to Spain. He brought with him a large supply of fresh provisions for the colony, and a number of genuine colonists, such as fishermen, carpenters, farmers, mechanics, and millers. And, better still, he brought a letter from the Sovereigns, dated the 16th of August 1494, which did much to cheer the shaken spirits of Columbus. The words

with which he had freighted his empty ships had not been in vain; and in this reply to them he was warmly commended for his diligence, and reminded that he enjoyed the unshaken confidence of his Sovereigns. They proposed that a caravel should sail every month from Spain and from Isabella, bearing intelligence of the colony and also, it was hoped, some of its products. In a general letter addressed to the colony the settlers were reminded of the obedience they owed to the Admiral, and were instructed to obey him in all things, under the penalty of heavy fines. They invited Columbus to come back if he could in order to be present at the convention which was to establish the line of demarcation between Spanish and Portuguese possessions; or if he could not come himself to send his brother Bartholomew. There were reasons, however, which made this difficult. Columbus wished to despatch the ships back again as speedily as possible, in order that news of him might help to counteract the evil rumours that he knew Buïl and Màrgarite would be spreading. He himself was as yet (February 1495) too ill to travel; and during his illness Bartholomew could not easily be spared. It was therefore decided to send home James, who could most easily be spared, and whose testimony as a member of the governing body during the absence of the Admiral on his voyage to Cuba might be relied upon to counteract the jealous accusations of Màrgarite and Buïl.

Unfortunately there was no golden cargo to send back with him. As much gold as possible was scraped together, but it was very little. The usual assortment of samples of various island products was also sent; but still the vessels were practically empty. Columbus must have been painfully conscious that the time for sending samples had more than expired, and that the people in Spain might reasonably expect some of the actual riches of which there had been so many specimens and promises. In something approaching desperation, he decided to fill the empty hold of the ships with something which, if it was not actual money, could at least be made to realise money. From their sunny, dreaming life on the island five hundred natives were taken and lodged in the dark holds of the caravels, to be sent to Spain and sold there for what they would fetch. Of course they were to be "freed" and converted to Christianity in the process; that was always part of the programme, but it did not interfere with business. They were not man-eating Caribs or fierce marauding savages from neighbouring islands, but were of the mild and peaceable race that peopled Española.

The wheels of civilisation were beginning to turn in the New World.

After the capture of Caonabo and the massacre of April 25 Columbus marched through the island, receiving the surrender and submission of the terrified natives. At the approach of his force the *caciques* came out and sued for peace; and if here and there there was a momentary resistance, a charge of cavalry soon put an end to it. One by one the kings surrendered and laid down their arms, until all the island rulers had capitulated with the exception of Behechio, into whose territory Columbus did not march, and who sullenly retired to the south-western corner of the island. The terms of peace were harsh enough, and were suggested by the dilemma of Columbus in his frantic desire to get together some gold at any cost. A tribute of gold-dust was laid upon every adult native in the island. Every three months a hawk's bell full of gold was to be brought to the treasury at Isabella, and in the case of *caciques* the measure was a calabash. A receipt in the form of a brass medal was fastened to the neck of every Indian when he paid his tribute, and those who could not show the medal with the necessary number of marks were to be further fined and punished. In the districts where there was no gold, 25 lbs. of cotton was accepted instead.

This levy was made in ignorance of the real conditions under which the natives possessed themselves of the gold. What they had in many cases represented the store of years, and in all but one or two favoured districts it was quite impossible for them to keep up the amount of the tribute. Yet the hawks' bells, which once had been so eagerly coveted and were now becoming hated symbols of oppression, had to be filled somehow; and as the day of payment drew near the wretched natives, who had formerly only sought gold when a little of it was wanted for a pretty ornament, had now to work with frantic energy in the river sands; or in other cases, to toil through the heat of the day in the cotton-fields which they had formerly only cultivated enough to furnish their very scant requirements of use and adornment. One or two *caciques*, knowing that their people could not possibly furnish the required amount of gold, begged that its value in grain might be accepted instead; but that was not the kind of wealth that Columbus was seeking. It must be gold or nothing; and rather than receive any other article

from the gold-bearing districts, he consented to take half the amount.

Thus step by step, and under the banner of the Christian religion, did dark and cruel misery march through the groves and glades of the island and banish for ever its ancient peace. This long-vanished race that was native to the island of Española seems to have had some of the happiest and most lovable qualities known to dwellers on this planet. They had none of the brutalities of the African, the paralysing wisdom of the Asian, nor the tragic potentialities of the European peoples. Their life was from day to day, and from season to season, like the life of flowers and birds. They lived in such order and peaceable community as the common-sense of their own simple needs suggested; they craved no pleasures except those that came free from nature, and sought no wealth but what the sun gave them. In their verdant island, near to the heart and source of light, surrounded by the murmur of the sea, and so enriched by nature that the idea of any other kind of riches never occurred to them, their existence went to a happy, dancing measure like that of the fauns and nymphs in whose charmed existence they believed. The sun and moon were to them creatures of their island who had escaped from a cavern by the shore and now wandered free in the upper air, peopling it with happy stars; and man himself they believed to have sprung from crevices in the rocks, like the plants that grew tall and beautiful wherever there was a handful of soil for their roots. Poor happy children! They are all dead a long while ago now, and have long been hushed in the great humming sleep and silence of Time; the modern world has no time nor room for people like them, with so much kindness and so little ambition. . . . Yet their free pagan souls were given a chance to be penned within the Christian fold; the priest accompanied the gunner and the bloodhound, the missionary walked beside the slave-driver; and upon the bewildered sun-bright surface of their minds the shadow of the cross was for a moment thrown. Verily to them the professors of Christ brought not peace, but a sword.

CHAPTER III

UPS AND DOWNS

WHILE Columbus was toiling under the tropical sun to make good his promises to the Crown, Màrgarite and Buïl, having safely come home to Spain from across the seas, were busy setting forth their view of the value of his discoveries. It was a view entirely different from any that Ferdinand and Isabella had heard before, and coming as it did from two men of position and importance who had actually been in Española, and were loyal and religious subjects of the Crown, it could not fail to receive, if not immediate and complete credence, at any rate grave attention. Hitherto the Sovereigns had only heard one side of the matter; an occasional jealous voice may have been raised from the neighbourhood of the Pinzons or some one else not entirely satisfied with his own position in the affair; but such small cries of dissent had naturally had little chance against the dignified eloquence of the Admiral.

Now, however, the matter was different. People who were at least the equals of Columbus in intelligence, and his superiors by birth and education, had seen with their own eyes the things of which he had spoken, and their account differed widely from his. They represented things in Española as being in a very bad way indeed, which was true enough; drew a dismal picture of an overcrowded colony ravaged with disease and suffering from lack of provisions; and held forth at length upon the very doubtful quantity of the gold with which the New World was supposed to abound. More than this, they brought grave charges against Columbus himself, representing him as unfit to govern a colony, given to favouritism, and, worst of all, guilty of having deliberately misrepresented for his own ends the resources of the colony. This as we know was not true. It was not for his own ends, nor for any ends at all within the comprehension of men like Màrgarite and Buïl, that he had spoken so glowingly out of a heart full of faith in what he had seen and done. Purposes, dim perhaps, but far greater and loftier than any of which these

two mean souls had understanding, animated him alike in his discoveries and in his account of them; although that does not alter the unpleasant fact that at the stage matters had now reached it seemed as though there might have been serious misrepresentation.

Ferdinand and Isabella, thus confronted with a rather difficult situation, acted with great wisdom and good sense. How much or how little they believed we do not know, but it was obviously their duty, having heard such an account from responsible officers, to investigate matters for themselves without assuming either that the report was true or untrue. They immediately had four caravels furnished with supplies, and decided to appoint an agent to accompany the expedition, investigate the affairs of the colony, and make a report to them. If the Admiral was still absent when their agent reached the colony he was to be entrusted with the distribution of the supplies which were being sent out; for Columbus's long absence from Española had given rise to some fears for his safety.

The Sovereigns had just come to this decision (April 1495) when a letter arrived from the Admiral himself, announcing his return to Española after discovering the veritable mainland of Asia, as the notarial document enclosed with the letter attested. Torres and James Columbus had arrived in Spain, bearing the memorandum which some time ago we saw the Admiral writing; and they were able to do something towards allaying the fears of the Sovereigns as to the condition of the colony. The King and Queen, nevertheless, wisely decided to carry out their original intention, and in appointing an agent they very handsomely chose one of the men whom Columbus had recommended to them in his letter—Juan Aguado. This action shows a friendliness to Columbus and confidence in him that lead one to suspect that the tales of Màrgarite and Buil had been taken with a grain of salt.

At the same time the Sovereigns made one or two orders which could not but be unwelcome to Columbus. A decree was issued making it lawful for all native-born Spaniards to make voyages of discovery, and to settle in Española itself if they liked. This was an infringement of the original privileges granted to the Admiral—privileges which were really absurd, and which can only have been granted in complete disbelief that anything much would come of his discovery. It took Columbus two years to get this order modified; and in the meantime a great many

Spanish adventurers, our old friends the Pinzons among them, did actually make voyages, and added to the area explored by the Spaniards in Columbus's lifetime. Columbus was bitterly jealous that any one should be admitted to the western ocean, which he regarded as his special preserve, except under his supreme authority; and he is reported to have said that once the way to the West had been pointed out "even the very tailors turned explorers." There, surely, spoke the long-dormant wool-weaver in him.

The commission given to Aguado was very brief, and so vaguely worded that it might mean much or little, according to the discretion of the commissioner and the necessities of the case as reviewed by him. "We send to you Juan Aguado, our Groom of the Chambers, who will speak to you on our part. We command you to give him faith and credit." A letter was also sent to Columbus in which he was instructed to reduce the number of people dependent on the colony to five hundred instead of a thousand; and the control of the mines was entrusted to one Pablo Belvis, who was sent out as chief metallurgist. As for the slaves that Columbus had sent home, Isabella forbade their sale until inquiry could be made into the condition of their capture, and the fine moral point involved was entrusted to the ecclesiastical authorities for examination and solution. Christopher, knowing as he did that five hundred heretics were being burned every year by the Grand Inquisitor, had not expected this hair-splitting over the fate of heathens who had rebelled against Spanish authority; and it caused him some distress when he heard of it. The theologians, however, proved equal to the occasion, and the slaves were duly sold in Seville market.

Aguado sailed from Cadiz at the end of August 1495, and reached Española in October. James Columbus (who does not as yet seem to be in very great demand anywhere, and who doubtless conceals behind his grave visage much honest amazement at the amount of life that he is seeing) returned with him. Aguado, on arriving at Isabella, found that Columbus was absent establishing forts in the interior of the island, Bartholomew being left in charge at Isabella. Aguado, who had apparently been found faithful in small matters, was found wanting in his use of the authority that had been entrusted to him. It seems to have turned his head; for instead of beginning quietly

to investigate the affairs of the colony as he had been commanded to do, he took over from Bartholomew the actual government, and interpreted his commission as giving him the right to supersede the Admiral himself. The unhappy colony, which had no doubt been enjoying some brief period of peace under the wise direction of Bartholomew, was again thrown into confusion by the doings of Aguado. He arrested this person, imprisoned that; ordered that things should be done this way, which had formerly been done that way; and if they had formerly been done that way, then he ordered that they should be done this way—in short, he committed every mistake possible for a man in his situation armed with a little brief authority. He did not hesitate to let it be known that he was there to examine the conduct of the Admiral himself; and we may be quite sure that every one in the colony who had a grievance or an ill tale to carry, carried it to Aguado. His whole attitude was one of enmity and disloyalty to the Admiral who had so handsomely recommended him to the notice of the Sovereigns; and so undisguised was his attitude that even the Indians began to lodge their complaints and to see a chance by which they might escape from the intolerable burden of the gold tribute.

It was at this point that Columbus returned and found Aguado ruling in the place of Bartholomew, who had wisely made no protest against his own deposition, but was quietly waiting for the Admiral to return. Columbus might surely have been forgiven if he had betrayed extreme anger and annoyance at the doings of Aguado; and it is entirely to his credit that he concealed such natural wrath as he may have felt, and greeted Aguado with extreme courtesy and ceremony as a representative of the Sovereigns. He made no protest, but decided to return himself to Spain and confront the jealousy and ill-fame that were accumulating against him.

Just as the ships were all ready to sail, one of the hurricanes which occur periodically in the West Indies burst upon the island, lashing the sea into a wall of advancing foam that destroyed everything before it. Among other things it destroyed three out of four ships, dashing them on the beach and reducing them to complete wreckage. The only one that held to her anchor, and, although much battered and damaged, rode out the gale, was the *Niña*, that staunch little friend that had remained faithful to the Admiral through so many dangers and trials. There was nothing for it but to build a new ship out of

the fragments of the wrecks, and to make the journey home with two ships instead of with four.

At this moment, while he was waiting for the ship to be completed, Columbus heard a piece of news of a kind that never failed to rouse his interest. There was a young Spaniard named Miguel Diaz who had got into disgrace in Isabella some time before on account of a duel, and had wandered into the island until he had come out on the south coast at the mouth of the river Ozama, near the site of the present town of Santo Domingo. There he had fallen in love with a female *cacique* and had made his home with her. She, knowing the Spanish taste, and anxious to please her lover and to retain him in her territory, told him of some rich gold mines that there were in the neighbourhood, and suggested that he should inform the Admiral, who would perhaps remove the settlement from Isabella to the south coast. She provided him with guides and sent him off to Isabella, where, hearing that his antagonist had recovered, and that he himself was therefore in no danger of punishment, he presented himself with his story. Columbus immediately despatched Bartholomew with a party to examine the mines; and sure enough they found in the river Hayna undoubted evidence of a wealth far in excess of that contained in the Cibao gold mines. Moreover, they had noticed two ancient excavations about which the natives could tell them nothing, but which made them think that the mines had once been worked.

Columbus was never backward in fitting a story and a theory to whatever phenomena surrounded him; and in this case he was certain that the excavations were the work of Solomon, and that he had discovered the gold of Ophir. "Surely," thinks the Admiral, "I have hit it this time; and the ships came eastward from the Persian Gulf round the Golden Chersonesus, which I discovered this very last winter." Immediately, as his habit was, Columbus began to build castles in Spain. Here was a fine answer to Buil and Margarite! Without waiting a week or two to get any of the gold, this extraordinary man decided to hurry off at once to Spain with the news, not dreaming that Spain might, by this time, have had a surfeit of news, and might be in serious need of some simple, honest facts. But he thought his two caravels sufficiently freighted with this new belief—the belief that he had discovered the Ophir of Solomon.

The Admiral sailed on March 10, 1496, carrying with him in chains the vanquished Caonabo and other natives. He touched at Marigalante and at Guadaloupe, where his people had an engagement with the natives, taking several prisoners, but releasing them all again with the exception of one woman, a handsome creature who had fallen in love with Caonabo and refused to go. But for Caonabo the joys of life and love were at an end; his heart and spirit were broken. He was not destined to be paraded as a captive through the streets of Spain, and it was somewhere in the deep Atlantic that he paid the last tribute to the power that had captured and broken him. He died on the voyage, which was longer and much more full of hardships than usual. For some reason or other Columbus did not take the northerly route going home, but sailed east from Guadaloupe, encountering the easterly trade-winds, which delayed him so much that the voyage occupied three months instead of six weeks.

Once more he exhibited his easy mastery of the art of navigation and his extraordinary gift for estimating dead-reckoning. After having been out of sight of land for eight weeks, and while some of the sailors thought they might be in the Bay of Biscay, and others that they were in the English Channel, the Admiral suddenly announced that they were close to Cape Saint Vincent. No land was in sight, but he ordered that sail should be shortened that evening; and punctually the next morning they sighted the land close by Cape Saint Vincent. Columbus managed his landfalls with a fine dramatic sense, as though they were conjuring tricks; and indeed they must have seemed like conjuring tricks, except that they were almost always successful.

CHAPTER IV

IN SPAIN AGAIN

THE loiterers about the harbour of Cadiz saw a curious sight on June 11, 1496, when the two battered ships, bearing back the voyagers from the Eldorado of the West, disembarked their passengers. There were some 220 souls on board, including thirty Indians: and instead of leaping ashore, flushed with health, and bringing the fortunes which they had gone out to seek, they crawled miserably from the boats or were carried ashore, emaciated by starvation, yellow with disease, ragged and unkempt from poverty, and with practically no possessions other than the clothes they stood up in. Even the Admiral, now in his forty-sixth year, hardly had the appearance that one would expect in a Viceroy of the Indies. His white hair and beard were rough and matted, his handsome face furrowed by care and sunken by illness and exhaustion, and instead of the glittering armour and uniform of his office he wore the plain robe and girdle of the Franciscan order—this last probably in consequence of some vow or other he had made in an hour of peril on the voyage.

One lucky coincidence marked his arrival. In the harbour, preparing to weigh anchor, was a fleet of three little caravels, commanded by Pedro Niño, about to set out for Española with supplies and despatches. Columbus hurried on board Niño's ship, and there read the letters from the Sovereigns which it had been designed he should receive in Española. The letters are not preserved, but one can make a fair guess at their contents. Some searching questions would certainly be asked; kind assurances of continued confidence would doubtless be given, with many suggestions for the betterment of affairs in the distant colony. Only their result upon the Admiral is known to us. He sat down there and then and wrote to Bartholomew, urging him to secure peace in the island by every means in his power, to send home any *caciques* or natives who were likely to give trouble, and most of all to push on with the building of a settlement on the south coast where the new mines were, and to have a cargo of

gold ready to send back with the next expedition. Having written this letter, the Admiral saw the little fleet sail away on June 17, and himself prepared, with mingled feelings, to present himself before his Sovereigns.

While he was waiting for their summons at Los Palacios, a small town near Seville, he was the guest of the curate of that place, Andrez Bernaldez, who had been chaplain to Christopher's old friend Deza, the Archbishop of Seville. This good priest evidently proved a staunch friend to Columbus at this anxious period of his life, for the Admiral left many important papers in his charge when he again left Spain, and no small part of the scant contemporary information about Columbus that has come down to us is contained in the "Historia de los Reyes Catolicos," which Bernaldez wrote after the death of Columbus.

Fickle Spain had already forgotten its first sentimental enthusiasm over the Admiral's discoveries, and now was only interested in their financial results. People cannot be continually excited about a thing which they have not seen; and there were events much nearer home that absorbed the public interest. There was the trouble with France, the contemplated alliance of the Crown Prince with Margaret of Austria, and of the Spanish Princess Juana with Philip of Austria; and there were the designs of Ferdinand upon the kingdom of Naples, which was in his eyes a much more desirable and valuable prize than any group of unknown islands beyond the ocean.

Columbus did his very best to work up enthusiasm again. He repeated the performance that had been such a success after his first voyage—the kind of circus procession in which the natives were marched in column surrounded by specimens of the wealth of the Indies. But somehow it did not work so well this time. Where there had formerly been acclamations and crowds pressing forward to view the savages and their ornaments, there were now apathy and a dearth of spectators. And although Columbus did his very best, and was careful to exhibit every scrap of gold that he had brought, and to hang golden collars and ornaments about the necks of the marching Indians, his exhibition was received either in ominous silence or, in some quarters, with something like derision. As I have said before, there comes a time when the best-disposed creditors do not regard themselves as being repaid by promises, and when the most enthusiastic optimist desires to see something more than

samples. Flamingoes, macaws, sea-shells, dye-woods, gums, and spices—round they went; some people laughed, and some were angry; but all were united in thinking that the New World was not a very profitable speculation.

Things were a little better, however, at Court. Isabella certainly believed still in Columbus; Ferdinand, although he had never been enthusiastic, knew the Admiral too well to make the vulgar mistake of believing him an impostor; and both were too polite and considerate to add to his obvious mortification and distress by any discouraging comments. Moreover, the man himself had lost neither his belief in the value of his discoveries nor his eloquence in talking of them; and when he told his story to the Sovereigns they could not help being impressed, not only with his sincerity but with his ability and single-heartedness also. It was almost the same old story, of illimitable wealth that was just about to be acquired, and perhaps no one but Columbus could have made it go down once more with success; but talking about his exploits was never any trouble to him, and his astonishing conviction, the lofty and dignified manner in which he described both good and bad fortune, and the impressive way in which he spoke of the wealth of the gold of Ophir and of the far-reaching importance of his supposed discovery of the Golden Chersonesus and the mainland of Asia, had their due effect on his hearers.

It was always his plausible way to pass lightly over the premises and to dwell with elaborate detail on the deductions. It was by no means proved that he had discovered the mines of King Solomon; he had never even seen the place which he identified with them; it was in fact nothing more than an idea in his own head; but we may be sure that he took it as an established fact that he had actually discovered the mines of Ophir, and confined his discussion to estimates of the wealth which they were likely to yield, and of what was to be done with the wealth when the mere details of conveying it from the mines to the ships had been disposed of. So also with the Golden Chersonesus. The very name was enough to stop the mouths of doubters; and here was the man himself who had actually been there, and here was a sworn affidavit from every member of his crew to say that they had been there too. This kind of logic is irresistible if you only grant the first little step; and Columbus had the art of making it seem an act of imbecility in any of his hearers to doubt the strength of the little link by which his great golden chains of argument were fastened to fact and truth.

For Columbus everything depended upon his reception by the Sovereigns at this time. Unless he could re-establish his hold upon them and move to a still more secure position in their confidence he was a ruined man and his career was finished; and one cannot but sympathise with him as he sits there searching his mind for tempting and convincing arguments, and speaking so calmly and gravely and confidently in spite of all the doubts and flutterings in his heart. Like a tradesman setting out his wares, he brought forth every inducement he could think of to convince the Sovereigns that the only way to make a success of what they had already done was to do more; that the only way to make profitable the money that had already been spent was to spend more; that the only way to prove the wisdom of their trust in him was to trust him more. One of his transcendent merits in a situation of this kind was that he always had something new and interesting to propose. He did not spread out his hands and say, "This is what I have done: it is the best I can do; how are you going to treat me?" He said in effect, "This is what I have done; you will see that it will all come right in time; do not worry about it; but meanwhile I have something else to propose which I think your Majesties will consider a good plan."

His new demand was for a fleet of six ships, two of which were to convey supplies to Española, and the other four to be entrusted to him for the purpose of a voyage of discovery towards the mainland to the south of Española, of which he had heard consistent rumours; which was said to be rich in gold, and (a clever touch) to which the King of Portugal was thinking of sending a fleet, as he thought that it might lie within the limits of his domain of heathendom. And so well did he manage, and so deeply did he impress the Sovereigns with his assurance that this time the thing amounted to what is vulgarly called "a dead certainty," that they promised him he should have his ships.

But promise and performance, as no one knew better than Columbus, are different things; and it was a long while before he got his ships. There was the usual scarcity of money; and the extensive military diplomatic operations in which the Crown was then engaged absorbed every maravedi that Ferdinand could lay his hands on. There was an army to be maintained under the Pyrenees to keep watch over France; fleets had to

be kept patrolling both the Mediterranean and Atlantic seaboards; and there was a whole armada required to convey the princesses of Spain and Austria to their respective husbands in connection with the double matrimonial alliance arranged between the two countries. And when at last, in October 1496, six million maravedis were provided wherewith Columbus might equip his fleet, they were withdrawn again under very mortifying circumstances. The appropriation had just been made when a letter arrived from Pedro Niño, who had been to Española and come back again, and now wrote from Cadiz to the Sovereigns, saying that his ships were full of gold. He did not present himself at Court, but went to visit his family at Huelva; but the good news of his letter was accepted as an excuse for this oversight.

No one was better pleased than the Admiral. "What did I tell you?" he says; "you see the mines of Hayna are paying already." King Ferdinand, equally pleased, and having an urgent need of money in connection with his operations against France, took the opportunity to cancel the appropriation of the six million maravedis, giving Columbus instead an order for the amount to be paid out of the treasure brought home by Niño. Alas, the mariner's boast of gold had been a figure of speech. There was no gold; there was only a cargo of slaves, which Niño deemed the equivalent of gold; and when Bartholomew's despatches came to be read he described the affairs of Española as being in very much the same condition as before. This incident produced a most unfortunate impression. Even Columbus was obliged to keep quiet for a little while; and it is likely that the mention of six million maravedis was not welcomed by him for some time afterwards.

After the wedding of Prince Juan in March 1497, when Queen Isabella had more time to give to external affairs, the promise to Columbus was again remembered, and his position was considered in detail. An order was made (April 23, 1497) restoring to the Admiral the original privileges bestowed upon him at Santa Fé. He was offered a large tract of land in Española, with the title of Duke; but much as he hankered after titular honours, he was for once prudent enough to refuse this gift. His reason was that it would only further damage his influence, and give apparent justification to those enemies who said that the whole enterprise had been undertaken merely in his own interests; and it is possible also that his many painful associations with Española, and the bloodshed and horrors that

he had witnessed there, had aroused in his superstitious mind a distaste for possessions and titles in that devastated Paradise. Instead, he accepted a measure of relief from the obligations incurred by his eighth share in the many unprofitable expeditions that had been sent out during the last three years, agreeing for the next three years to receive an eighth share of the gross income, and a tenth of the net profits, without contributing anything to the cost. His appointment of Bartholomew to the office of Adelantado, which had annoyed Ferdinand, was now confirmed; the universal licence which had been granted to Spanish subjects to settle in the new lands was revoked in so far as it infringed the Admiral's privileges; and he was granted a force of 330 officers, soldiers, and artificers to be at his personal disposal in the prosecution of his next voyage.

The death of Prince Juan in October 1497 once more distracted the attention of the Court from all but personal matters; and Columbus employed the time of waiting in drafting a testamentary document [1] in which he was permitted to create an entail on his title and estates in favour of his two sons and their heirs for ever. This did not represent his complete or final testament, for he added codicils at various times, the latest being executed the day before his death. The document is worth studying; it reveals something of the laborious, painstaking mind reaching out down the rivers and streams of the future that were to flow from the fountain of his own greatness; it reveals also his triple conception of the obligations of human life in this world—the cultivation and retention of temporal dignity, the performance of pious and charitable acts, and the recognition of duty to one's family. It was in this document that Columbus formulated the curious cipher which he always now used in signing his name, and of which various readings are given in the Appendix.[2] He also enjoined upon his heir the duty of using the simple title which he himself loved and used most—"The Admiral."

After the death of Prince Juan, Queen Isabella honoured Columbus by attaching his two sons to her own person as pages; and her friendship must at this time have gone far to compensate him for the coolness shown towards him by the public at large. He might talk as much as he pleased, but he

[1] See Appendix F. [2] See Appendix D.

had nothing to show for all his talk except a few trinkets, a collection of interesting but valueless botanical specimens, and a handful of miserable slaves. Lives and fortunes had been wrecked on the enterprise, which had so far brought nothing to Spain but the promise of luxurious adventure that was not fulfilled and of a wealth and glory that had not been realised.

It must have been a humiliating circumstance for Columbus that in the preparations which he was now (February 1498) making for the equipment of his new expedition a great difficulty was found in procuring ships and men. Not even before the first voyage had so much reluctance been shown to risk life and property in the enterprise. Merchants and sailors had then been frightened of dangers which they did not know; now, it seemed, the evils of which they did know proved a still greater deterrent. The Admiral was at this time the guest of his friend Bernaldez, who has told us something of his difficulties; and the humiliating expedient of seizing ships under a royal order had finally to be adopted. But it would never have done to impress the colonists also; that would have been too open a confession of failure for the proud Admiral to tolerate.

Instead he had recourse to the miserable plan of which he had made use in Palos; the prisons were opened, and criminals under sentence invited to come forth and enjoy the blessings of colonial life. Even then there was not that rush from the prison doors that might have been expected, and some desperate characters apparently preferred the mercies of a Spanish prison to what they had heard of the joys of the Earthly Paradise. Still, a number of criminals did doubtfully crawl forth and furnish a retinue for the great Admiral and Viceroy. Trembling, suspicious, and with more than half a mind to go back to their bonds, some part of the human vermin of Spain was eventually cajoled and chivvied on board the ships.

The needs of the colony being urgent, and recruiting being slow, two caravels laden with provisions were sent off in advance; but even for this purpose there was a difficulty about money, and Isabella furnished the expense, at much inconvenience, from her private purse. Columbus had to supervise everything himself; and no wonder that by the end of May, when he was ready to sail, his patience and temper were exhausted and his much-tried endurance broke down under the petty, gnat-like irritations of Fonseca and his myrmidons. It

was on the deck of his own ship, in the harbour of San Lucar, that he knocked down and soundly kicked Ximeno de Breviesca, Fonseca's accountant, whose nagging requisitions had driven the Admiral to fury.

After all these years of gravity and restraint and endurance, this momentary outbreak of the Old Adam in our hero is like a breath of wind through an open window. To the portraits of Columbus hanging in the gallery of one's imagination this must surely be added ; in which Christopher, on the deck of his ship, with the royal standard and the Admiral's flag flying from his masthead, is observed to be soundly kicking a prostrate accountant. The incident is worthy of a date, which is accordingly here given, as near as may be—May 29, 1498.

CHAPTER V

THE THIRD VOYAGE

COLUMBUS was at sea again; firm ground to him, although so treacherous and unstable to most of us; and as he saw the Spanish coast sinking down on the horizon he could shake himself free from his troubles, and feel that once more he was in a situation of which he was master. He first touched at Porto Santo, where, if the story of his residence there be true, there must have been potent memories for him in the sight of the long white beach and the plantations, and the Governor's house beyond. He stayed there only a few hours, and then crossed over to Madeira, anchoring in the Bay of Funchal, where he took in wood and water. As it was really unnecessary for him to make a port so soon after leaving, there was probably some other reason for his visit to these islands; perhaps a family reason; perhaps nothing more historically important than the desire to look once more on scenes of bygone happiness, for even on the page of history every event is not necessarily big with significance. From Madeira he took a southerly course to the Canary Islands, and on June 16 anchored at Gomera, where he found a French warship with two Spanish prizes, all of which put to sea as the Admiral's fleet approached. On June 21, when he sailed from Gomera, he divided his fleet of six vessels into two squadrons. Three ships were despatched direct to Española, for the supplies which they carried were urgently needed there. These three ships were commanded by trustworthy men: Pedro de Arana, a brother of Beatriz, Alonso Sanchez de Carvajal, and Juan Antonio Colombo—this last no other than a cousin of Christopher from Genoa. The sons of Domenico's provident younger brother had not prospered, while the sons of improvident Domenico were now all in high places; and these three poor cousins, hearing of Christopher's greatness, and deciding that use should be made of him, scraped together enough money to send one of their number to Spain. The Admiral always had a sound family feeling, and finding that cousin Antonio had sea ex-

perience and knew how to handle a ship, he gave him command of one of the caravels on this voyage—a command of which he proved capable and worthy. From these three captains, after giving them full sailing directions for reaching Española, Columbus parted company off the island of Ferro. He himself stood on a southerly course towards the Cape Verde Islands.

His plan on this voyage was to find the mainland to the southward, of which he had heard rumours in Española. Before leaving Spain he had received a letter from an eminent lapidary named Ferrer who had travelled much in the east, and who assured him that if he sought gold and precious stones he must go to hot lands, and that the hotter the lands were, and the blacker the inhabitants, the more likely he was to find riches there. This was just the kind of theory to suit Columbus, and as he sailed towards the Cape Verde Islands he was already in imagination gathering gold and pearls on the shores of the equatorial continent.

He stayed for about a week at the Cape Verde Islands, getting in provisions and cattle, and curiously observing the life of the Portuguese lepers, who came in numbers to the island of Buenavista, to be cured there by eating the flesh and bathing in the blood of turtles. It was not an inspiriting week which he spent in that dreary place and enervating climate, with nothing to see but the goats feeding among the scrub, the turtles crawling about the sands, and the lepers following the turtles. It began to tell on the health of the crew, so he weighed anchor on July 5 and stood on a south-westerly course.

This third voyage, which was destined to be the most important of all, and the material for which had cost him so much time and labour, was undertaken in a very solemn and determined spirit. His health, which he had hoped to recover in Spain, had been if anything damaged by his worryings with officialdom there; and although he was only forty-seven years of age he was in some respects already an old man. He had entered, although happily he did not know it, on the last decade of his life; and was already beginning to suffer from the two diseases, gout and ophthalmia, which were soon to undermine his strength and endurance. Religion of a mystical, fifteenth-century sort was deepening in him; he had undertaken this voyage in the name of the Holy Trinity, to whom he had resolved to dedicate the first new land that he should sight.

For ten days light, baffling winds impeded his progress; but

at the end of that time the winds fell away altogether, and the voyagers found themselves in that flat equatorial calm known to mariners as the Doldrums. The vertical rays of the sun shone blisteringly down upon them, making the seams of the ships gape and causing the unhappy crews mental as well as bodily distress, for they began to fear that they had reached that zone of fire which had always been said to exist in the southern ocean. Day after day the three ships lay motionless on the glassy water, with wood-work so hot as to burn the hands that touched it, with the meat putrefying in the casks below, and the water running from the loosened casks, and no one with courage and endurance enough to venture into the stifling hold even to save the provisions. And through all this the Admiral, racked with gout, had to keep a cheerful face and assure his prostrate crew that they would soon be out of it.

There were showers of rain sometimes, but the moisture in that baking atmosphere only added to its stifling and enervating effects. All the while, however, the great, slow current of the Atlantic was moving westward, and there came a day when a heavenly breeze stirred in the torrid air and the musical talk of ripples began to rise again from the weedy stems of the ships. They sailed due west, always into a cooler and fresher atmosphere; but still no land was sighted, although pelicans and smaller birds were continually seen passing from south-west to north-east. As provisions were beginning to run low, Columbus decided on the 31st July to alter his course to north-by-east, in the hope of reaching the island of Dominica. But at mid-day his servant Alonso Perez, happening to go to the masthead, cried out that there was land in sight; and there to the westward rose three peaks of land united at the base. Here was the kind of coincidence which staggers even the unbeliever. Columbus had promised to dedicate the first land he saw to the Trinity; and here was the land, miraculously provided when he needed it most, three peaks in one peak, in due conformity with the doctrine of the Trinity. The Admiral was deeply affected; the God of his belief was indeed a good friend to him; and he wrote down his pious conviction that the event was a miracle, and summoned all hands to sing *Salve Regina*, with other hymns in praise of God and the Virgin Mary. The island was duly christened La Trinidad. By the hour of Compline they had come up with the south coast of the island, but it was the next day before the Admiral found a stream (probably at Moruga) where he could take in water. No natives were

to be seen, although there were footprints on the shore and other signs of human habitation.

He continued all day to sail slowly along the shore of the island, the green luxuriance of which astonished him; and sometimes he stood out from the coast to the southward as he made a long board to round this or that point. It must have been while reaching out in this way to the southward that he saw a low shore on his port hand some sixty miles to the south of Trinidad, and that his sight, although he did not know it, rested for the first time on the mainland of South America. The land seen was the low coast to the west of the Orinoco, and thinking that it was an island he gave it the name of Isla Sancta.

On the 2nd of August they were off the south-west of Trinidad, and saw the first inhabitants in the shape of a canoe full of armed natives, who approached the ships with threatening gestures. Columbus had brought out some musicians with him, possibly with the purpose of impressing the natives, and perhaps with the idea of making things a little more cheerful in Española; and the musicians were now duly called upon to give a performance, a tambourine-player standing on the forecastle and beating the rhythm for the ships' boys to dance to. The effect was other than was anticipated, for the natives immediately discharged a thick flight of arrows at the musicians, and the music and dancing abruptly ceased. Eventually the Indians were prevailed upon to come on board the two smaller ships and to receive gifts, after which they departed and were seen no more. Columbus landed, probably at the point on the south-west coast now known as La Brea, and made some observations of the vegetation and climate of Trinidad, noticing that the fruits and trees were similar to those of Española, and that oysters abounded, as well as "very large, infinite fish, and parrots as large as hens."

He saw another peak of the mainland to the north-west, which was the peninsula of Paria, and to which Columbus, taking it to be another island, gave the name of Isla de Gracia. Between him and this land lay a narrow channel through which a mighty current was flowing—that press of waters which, sweeping across the Atlantic from Africa, enters the Caribbean Sea, sprays round the Gulf of Mexico, and turns north again in the current known as the Gulf Stream. While his ships were anchored at the entrance to this channel and Columbus was wondering how he should cross it, a mighty flood of water suddenly came

down with a roar, sending a great surging wave in front of it. The vessels were lifted up as though by magic; two of them dragged their anchors from the bottom, and the other one broke her cable. This flood was probably caused by a sudden flush of fresh water from one of the many mouths of the Orinoco; but to Columbus, who had no thought of rivers in his mind, it was very alarming. Apparently, however, there was nothing for it but to get through the channel; and, having sent boats on in front to take soundings and see that there was clear water, he eventually piloted his little squadron through, with his heart in his mouth and his eyes fixed on the channel, to which he gave the name of Serpent's Mouth. Once beyond it he was in the smooth waters of the Gulf of Paria. He followed the northerly coast of Trinidad to the west until he came to a second channel, narrower than the first, through which the current boiled with still greater violence, and to which he gave the name of Dragon's Mouth. This is the channel between the north-westerly point of Trinidad and the islands off the eastern promontory of Paria. Columbus was bewildered, for he found that the water over the ship's side was fresh water, and he could not make out where it came from. Thinking that the peninsula of Paria was an island, and not wishing to attempt the dangerous passage of the Dragon's Mouth, he decided to coast along the southern shore of the land opposite, hoping to be able to turn north round its western extremity.

Sweeter blew the breezes, fresher grew the water, milder and more balmy the air, greener and deeper the vegetation of this beautiful region. The Admiral was ill with the gout, and suffering such pain from his eyes that he was sometimes blinded by it; but the excitement of the strange phenomena surrounding him kept him up, and his powers of observation, always acute, suffered no diminution. There were no inhabitants to be seen as they sailed along the coast, but monkeys climbed and chattered in the trees by the shore, and oysters were found clinging to the branches that dipped into the water. At last, in a bay where they anchored to take in water, a native canoe containing three men was seen cautiously approaching; and the men, who were shy, were captured by the device of a sailor jumping on to the gunwale of the canoe and overturning it, the natives being easily caught in the water, and afterwards soothed and captivated by the unfailing attraction of hawks' bells. They were tall men with

long hair, and they told Columbus that the name of their country was Paria; and when they were asked about other inhabitants they pointed to the west and signified that there was a great population in that direction.

On the 10th of August 1498 a party landed on this coast and formally took possession of it in the name of the Sovereigns of Spain. By an unlucky chance Columbus himself did not land. His eyes were troubling him so much that he was obliged to lie down in his cabin, and the formal act of possession was performed by a deputy. If he had only known! If he could but have guessed that this was indeed the mainland of a New World that did not exist even in his dreams, what agonies he would have suffered rather than permit any one else to pronounce the words of annexation! But he lay there in pain and suffering, his curious, mystical mind occupied with a conception very remote indeed from the truth.

For in that fertile hotbed of imagination, the Admiral's brain, a new and staggering theory had gradually been taking shape. As his ships had been wafted into this delicious region, as the airs had become sweeter, the vegetation more luxuriant, and the water of the sea fresher, he had solemnly arrived at the conclusion that he was approaching the region of the true terrestrial Paradise: the Garden of Eden that some of the Fathers had declared to be situated in the extreme east of the Old World, and in a region so high that the flood had not overwhelmed it. Columbus, thinking hard in his cabin, blood and brain a little fevered, comes to the conclusion that the world is not round, but pear-shaped. He knows that all this fresh water in the sea must come from a great distance and from no ordinary river; and he decides that its volume and direction have been acquired in its fall from the apex of the pear, from the very top of the world, from the Garden of Eden itself. It was a most beautiful conception, a theory worthy to be fitted to all the sweet sights and sounds in the world about him; but it led him farther and farther away from the truth, and blinded him to knowledge and understanding of what he had actually accomplished.

He had thought the coast of Cuba the mainland, and he now began to consider it at least possible that the peninsula of Paria was mainland also—another part of the same continent. That was the truth—Paria was the mainland—and if he had not

been so bemused by his dreams and theories he might have had some inkling of the real wonder and significance of his discovery. But no; in his profoundly unscientific mind there was little of that patience which holds men back from theorising and keeps them ready to receive the truth. He was patient enough in doing, but in thinking he was not patient at all. No sooner had he observed a fact than he must find a theory which would bring it into relation with the whole of his knowledge; and if the facts would not harmonise of themselves he invented a scheme of things by which they were forced into harmony. He was an adept in the art of inventing causes to fit facts, and then proving that the facts sprang from the causes; but his origins were tangible, immovable things of rock and soil that could be seen and visited by other men, and their true relation to the terrestrial phenomena accurately established; so that his very proofs were monumental, and became themselves the advertisements of his profound misjudgment. But meanwhile he is the Admiral of the Ocean Seas, and can "make it so"; and accordingly, in a state of mental instability, he makes the Gulf of Paria to be a slope of earth immediately below the Garden of Eden, although fortunately he does not this time provide a sworn affidavit of trembling ships' boys to confirm his discovery.

Meanwhile also here were pearls; the native women wore ropes of them all over their bodies, and a fair store of them were bartered for pieces of broken crockery. Asked as usual about the pearls the natives, also as usual, pointed vaguely to the west and south-west, and explained that there were more pearls in that direction. But the Admiral would not tarry. Although he believed that he was within reach of Eden and pearls, he was more anxious to get back to Española and send the thrilling news to Spain than he was to push on a little farther and really assure himself of the truth. How like him that was! Ideas to him were of more value than facts, as indeed they are to the world at large; but one is sometimes led to wonder whether he did not sometimes hesitate to turn his ideas into facts for very fear that they should turn out to be only ideas. Was he, in his relations with Spain and the world, a trader in the names rather than the substance of things? We have seen him going home to Spain and announcing the discovery of the Golden Chersonesus, although he had only discovered what he erroneously supposed to be an indication of it; proclaiming the discovery of the Ophir of Solomon without taking the trouble to

test for himself so tremendous an assumption; and we now see him hurrying away to dazzle Spain with the story that he has discovered the Garden of Eden without even trying to push on for a few days more to secure so much as a cutting from the Tree of Life.

These are grave considerations; for although a tangible Tree of Life is now of no importance to any human being, the doings of Admiral Christopher were of great importance to himself and to his fellow-men at that time, and are still to-day, through the infinite channels in which human thought and action run and continue throughout the world, of grave importance to us. Perhaps this is not quite the moment, now that the poor Admiral is lying in pain and weakness and not quite master of his own mind, to consider fully how he stands in this matter of honesty; we will leave it for the present until he is well again, or, better still, until his tale of life and action is complete, and comes as a whole before the bar of human judgment.

On August 11 Columbus turned east again after having given up the attempt to find a passage to the north round Paria. There were practical considerations that brought him to this action. As the water was growing shoaler and shoaler he had sent a caravel of light draft some way farther to the westward, and she reported that there lay ahead of her a great inner bay or gulf consisting of almost entirely fresh water. Provisions, moreover, were running short, and were, as usual, turning bad; the Admiral's health made vigorous action of any kind impossible for him; he was anxious about the condition of Española—anxious also, as we have seen, to send this great news home; and he therefore turned back and decided to risk the passage of the Dragon's Mouth. He anchored in the neighbouring harbour until the wind was in the right quarter, and with some trepidation put his ships into the boiling tideway. When they were in the middle of the passage the wind fell to a dead calm, and the ships, with their sails hanging loose, were borne on the dizzy surface of eddies, overfalls, and whirls of the tide. Fortunately there was deep water in the passage, and the strength of the current carried them safely through. Once outside they bore away to the northward, sighting the islands of Tobago and Grenada, and, turning westward again, came to the islands of Cubagua and Margarita, where three pounds of

pearls were bartered from the natives. A week after the passage of the Dragon's Mouth Columbus sighted the south coast of Española, which coast he made at a point a long way to the east of the new settlement that he had instructed Bartholomew to found; and as the winds were contrary, and he feared it might take him a long time to beat up against them, he sent a boat ashore with a letter which was to be delivered by a native messenger to the Adelantado. The letter was delivered; a few days later a caravel was sighted which contained Bartholomew himself; and once more, after a long separation, these two friends and brothers were united.

The see-saw motion of all affairs with which Columbus had to do was in full swing. We have seen him patching up matters in Española; hurrying to Spain just in time to rescue his damaged reputation and do something to restore it; and now when he had come back it was but a sorry tale that Bartholomew had to tell him. A fortress had been built at the Hayna gold mines, but provisions had been so scarce that there had been something like a famine among the workmen there; no digging had been done, no planting, no making of the place fit for human occupation and industry. Bartholomew had been kept busy collecting the native tribute, and planning out the beginnings of the settlement at the mouth of the river Ozema, which was at first called the New Isabella, but was afterwards named San Domingo in honour of old Domenico at Savona. The *cacique* Behechio had been giving trouble; had indeed marched out with an army against Bartholomew, but had been more or less reconciled by the intervention of his sister Anacaona, widow of the late Caonabo, who had apparently transferred her affections to Governor Bartholomew. The battle was turned into a friendly pagan festival—one of the last ever held on that once-happy island—in which native girls danced in a green grove, with the beautiful Anacaona, dressed only in garlands, carried on a litter in their midst.

But in the Vega Real, where a chapel had been built by the priests of the neighbouring settlement, who were beginning to make converts, trouble had arisen in consequence of an outrage on the wife of the *cacique* Guarionex. The chapel was raided, the shrine destroyed, and the sacred vessels carried off. The Spaniards seized a number of Indians whom they suspected of having had a hand in the desecration, and burned them at the

stake in the most approved manner of the Inquisition—a hideous punishment that fanned the remaining embers of the native spirit into flame, and produced a hostile combination of Guarionex and several other *caciques*, whose rebellion it took the Adelantado some trouble and display of arms to quench.

But the worst news of all was the treacherous revolt of Francisco Roldan, a Spaniard who had once been a servant of the Admiral, and who had been raised by him to the office of judge in the island—an able creature, but, like too many recipients of Christopher's favour, a treacherous rascal at bottom. As soon as the Admiral's back was turned Roldan had begun to make mischief, stirring up the discontent that was never far below the surface of life in the colony, and getting together a large band of rebellious ruffians. He had a plan to murder Bartholomew Columbus and place himself at the head of the colony, but this fell through. Then, in Bartholomew's absence, he had a passage with James Columbus, who had now returned to the island and had resumed his official duties at Isabella. Bartholomew, who was at another part of the coast collecting tribute, had sent a caravel laden with cotton to Isabella, and well-meaning James had her drawn up on the beach. Roldan took the opportunity to represent this innocent action as a sign of the intolerable autocracy of the Columbus family, who did not even wish a vessel to be in a condition to sail for Spain with news of their misdeeds. Insolent Roldan formally asked James to send the caravel to Spain with supplies; poor James refused and, perhaps being at bottom afraid of Roldan and his insolences, despatched him to the Vega Real with a force to bring to order some *caciques* who had been giving trouble. Possibly to his surprise, although not to ours, Roldan departed with alacrity at the head of seventy armed men. Honest, zealous James, no doubt; but also, we begin to fear, stupid James.

The Vega Real was the most attractive part of the colony, and the scene of infinite idleness and debauchery in the early days of the Spanish settlement. As Margarite and other mutineers had acted, so did Roldan and his soldiers now act, making sallies against several of the chain of forts that stretched across the island, and even upon Isabella itself; and returning to the Vega to the enjoyment of primitive wild pleasures. Roldan and Bartholomew Columbus stalked each other about the island with armed forces for several months, Roldan besieging Bar-

tholomew in the fortress at the Vega, which he had occupied in Roldan's absence, and trying to starve him out there. The arrival in February 1498 of the two ships which had been sent out from Spain in advance, and which brought also the news of the Admiral's undamaged favour at Court, and of the royal confirmation of Bartholomew's title, produced for the moment a good moral effect; Roldan went and sulked in the mountains, refusing to have any parley or communication with the Adelantado, declining indeed to treat with any one until the Admiral himself should return. In the meantime his influence with the natives was strong enough to produce a native revolt, which Bartholomew had only just succeeded in suppressing when Christopher arrived on August 30.

The Admiral was not a little distressed to find that the three ships from which he had parted company at Ferro had not yet arrived. His own voyage ought to have taken far longer than theirs; they had now been nine weeks at sea, and there was nothing to account for their long delay. When at last they did appear, however, they brought with them only a new complication. They had lost their way among the islands and had been searching about for Española, finally making a landfall there on the coast of Xaragua, the south-western province of the island, where Roldan and his followers were established. Roldan had received them and, concealing the fact of his treachery, procured a large store of provisions from them, his followers being meanwhile busy among the crews of the ships inciting them to mutiny and telling them of the oppression of the Admiral's rule and the joys of a lawless life. The gaol-birds were nothing loath; after eight weeks at sea a spell ashore in this pleasant land, with all kinds of indulgences which did not come within the ordinary regimen of convicts and sailors, greatly appealing to them. The result was that more than half of the crews mutinied and joined Roldan, and the captains were obliged to put to sea with their small loyal remnant. Carvajal remained behind in order to try to persuade Roldan to give himself up; but Roldan had no such idea, and Carvajal had to make his way by land to San Domingo, where he made his report to the Admiral.

Roldan has in fact delivered a kind of ultimatum. He will surrender to no one but the Admiral, and that only on condition that he gets a free pardon. If negotiations are opened, Roldan will treat with no one but Carvajal. The Admiral, whose grip of the situation is getting weaker and weaker, finds

himself in a difficulty. His loyal army is only some seventy strong, while Roldan has, of disloyal settlers, gaol-birds, and sailors, much more than that. The Admiral, since he cannot reduce his enemy's force by capturing them, seeks to do it by bribing them; and the greatest bribe that he can think of to offer to these malcontents is that any who like may have a free passage home in the five caravels which are now waiting to return to Spain. To such a pass have things come in the Paradise of Española! But the rabble finds life pleasant enough in Xaragua, where they are busy with indescribable pleasures; and for the moment there is no great response to this invitation to be gone. Columbus therefore despatches his ships, with such rabble of colonists, gaol-birds, and mariners as have already had their fill both of pain and pleasure, and writes his usual letter to the Sovereigns—half full of the glories of the new discoveries he has made, the other half setting forth the evil doings of Roldan, and begging that he may be summoned to Spain for trial there. Incidentally, also, he requests a further licence for two years for the capture and despatch of slaves to Spain. So the vessels sail back on October 18, 1498, and the Admiral turns wearily to the task of disentangling the web of difficulty that has woven itself about him.

Carvajal and Ballester—another loyal captain—were sent with a letter to Roldan urging him to come to terms, and Carvajal and Ballester added their own honest persuasions. But Roldan was firm; he wished to be quit of the Admiral and his rule, and to live independently in the island; and of his followers, although some here and there showed signs of submission, the greater number were so much in love with anarchy that they could not be counted upon. For two months negotiations of a sort were continued, Roldan even presenting himself under a guarantee of safety at San Domingo, where he had a fruitless conference with the Admiral; where also he had an opportunity of observing what a sorry state affairs in the capital were in, and what a mess Columbus was making of it all. Roldan, being a simple man, though a rascal, had only to remain firm in order to get his way against a mind like the Admiral's; and get his way he ultimately did. The Admiral made terms of a kind most humiliating to him, and utterly subversive of his influence and authority. The mutineers were not only to receive a pardon but a certificate (good Heavens!)

of good conduct. Caravels were to be sent to convey them to Spain; and they were to be permitted to carry with them all the slaves that they had collected and all the native young women whom they had ravished from their homes.

Columbus signs this document on the 21st of November, and promises that the ships shall be ready in fifty days; and then, at his wits' end, and hearing of irregularities in the interior of the island, sets off with Bartholomew to inspect the posts and restore them to order. In his absence the see-saw, in due obedience to the laws that govern all see-saws, gives a lurch to the other side, and things go all wrong again in San Domingo. The preparations for the despatch of the caravels are neglected as soon as his back is turned; not fifty days, but nearly one hundred days elapse before they are ready to sail from San Domingo to Xaragua. Even then they are delayed by storms and head winds; and when they do arrive Roldan and his company will not embark in them. The agreement has been broken; a new one must be made. Columbus, returning to San Domingo after long and harassing struggles on the other end of the see-saw, gets news of this deadlock, and at the same time has news from Fonseca in Spain of a far from agreeable character. His complaints against the people under him have been received by the Sovereigns and will be duly considered, but their Majesties have not time at the moment to go into them. That is the gist of it; and very cold cheer it is for the Admiral, balancing himself on this unstable see-saw with anxious eyes turned to Spain for encouragement and approval.

In the depression that followed the receipt of this letter he was no match for Roldan. He even himself took a caravel and sailed towards Xaragua, where he was met by Roldan, who boarded his ship and made his new proposals. Their impudence is astounding; and when we consider that the Admiral had in theory absolute powers in the island, the fact that such proposals could be made, not to say accepted, shows how far out of relation were his actual with his nominal powers. Roldan proposed that he should be allowed to give a number of his friends a free passage to Spain; that to all who should remain free grants of land should be given; and (a free pardon and certificate of good conduct contenting him no longer) that a proclamation should be made throughout the island admitting that all the charges of disloyalty and mutiny which had been

brought against him and his followers were without foundation; and, finally, that he should be restored to his office of Alcalde Mayor or chief magistrate.

Here was a bolus for Christopher to swallow; a bolus compounded of his own words, his own acts, his hope, dignity, supremacy. In dismal humiliation he accepted the terms, with the addition of a clause more scandalous still—to the effect that the mutineers reserved the right, in case the Admiral should fail in the exact performance of any of his promises, to enforce them by compulsion of arms or any other method they might think fit. This precious document was signed on September 28, 1499—just twelve months after the agreement which it was intended to replace; and the Admiral, sailing dismally back to San Domingo, ruefully pondered on the fruits of a year's delay. Even then he was trying to make excuses for himself, such as he made afterwards to the Sovereigns when he tried to explain that this shameful capitulation was invalid: that he signed under compulsion; that he was on board a ship, and so was not on his viceregal territory; that the rebels had already been tried, and that he had not the power to revoke a sentence which bore the authority of the Crown; that he had not the power to dispose of the Crown property—desperate, agonised shuffling of pride and self-esteem in the coils of trial and difficulty.

CHAPTER VI

AN INTERLUDE

A BREATH of salt air again will do us no harm as a relief from these perilous balancings of Columbus on the see-saw at Española. His true work in this world had indeed already been accomplished. When he smote the rock of western discovery many springs flowed from it, and some were destined to run in mightier channels than that which he himself followed. Among other men stirred by the news of Columbus's first voyage there was one walking the streets of Bristol in 1496 who was fired to a similar enterprise—a man of Venice, in boyhood named Juan Caboto, but now known in England, where he has some time been settled, as Captain John Cabot, a sailor and trader who had travelled much through the known sea roads of this world, and had a desire to travel upon others not so well known. He had been in the East, had seen the caravans of Mecca and the goods they carried, and, like Columbus, had conceived in his mind the roundness of the world as a practical fact rather than a mere mathematical theory. Hearing of Columbus's success, Cabot set what machinery in England he had access to in motion to secure for him patents from King Henry VII.; which patents he received on March 5, 1496. After spending a long time in preparation, and being perhaps a little delayed by diplomatic protests from the Spanish Ambassador in London, he sailed from Bristol in May 1497.

After sailing west two thousand leagues Cabot found land in the neighbourhood of Cape Breton, and was thus in all probability the first discoverer, since the Icelanders, of the mainland of the New World. He turned northward, sailed through the strait of Belle Isle, and came home again, having accomplished his task in three months. Cabot, like Columbus, believed he had seen the territory of the Great Khan, of whom he told the interested population of Bristol some strange things. He further told them of the probable riches of this new land if it were followed in a southerly direction; told them some lies

also, it appears, since he said that the waters there were so dense with fish that his vessels could hardly move in them. He received a gratuity of £10 and a pension, and made a great sensation in Bristol by walking about the city dressed in fine silk garments. He took other voyages also with his son Sebastian, who followed with him the rapidly widening stream of discovery and became Pilot Major of Spain, and President of the Congress appointed in 1524 to settle the conflicting pretensions of various discoverers; but so far as our narrative is concerned, having sailed across from Bristol and discovered the mainland of the New World some years before Columbus discovered it, John Cabot sails into oblivion.

Another great conquest of the salt unknown had taken place a few days before Columbus sailed on his third voyage. The accidental discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomew Diaz in 1486 had not been neglected by Portugal; and the achievements of Columbus, while they cut off Portuguese enterprise from the western ocean, had only stimulated it to greater activity within its own spheres. Vasco da Gama sailed from Lisbon in July 1497; by the end of November he had rounded the Cape of Good Hope; and in May 1498, after a long voyage full of interest, peril, and hardship, he had landed at Calicut, on the shores of the true India. He came back in 1499 with a battered remnant, his crew disabled by sickness and exhaustion, and half his ships lost; but he had in fact discovered a road for trade and adventure to the East that was not paved with promises, dreams, or mad affidavits, but was a real and tangible achievement, bringing its reward in commerce and wealth for Portugal. At that very moment Columbus was groping round the mainland of South America, thinking it to be the coast of Cathay, and the Garden of Eden, and God knows what other cosmographical-theological abstractions; and Portugal, busy with her arrangements for making money, could afford for the moment to look on undismayed at the development of the mine of promises discovered by the Spanish Admiral.

The anxiety of Columbus to communicate the names of things before he had made sure of their substance received another rude chastisement in the events that followed the receipt in Spain of his letter announcing the discovery of the Garden of Eden and the land of pearls. People in Spain were not greatly

interested in his theories of the terrestrial Paradise; but more than one adventurer pricked up his ears at the name of pearls, and among the first was our friend Alonso de Ojeda, who had returned some time before from Española and was living in Spain. His position as a member of Columbus's force on the second voyage and the distinction he had gained there gave him special opportunities of access to the letters and papers sent home by Columbus; and he found no difficulty in getting Fonseca to show him the maps and charts of the coast of Paria sent back by the Admiral, the veritable pearls which had been gathered, and the enthusiastic descriptions of the wealth of this new coast. Knowing something of Española, and of the Admiral also, and reading in the despatches of the turbulent condition of the colony, he had a shrewd idea that Columbus's hands would be kept pretty full in Española itself, and that he would have no opportunity for some time to make any more voyages of discovery. He therefore represented to Fonseca what a pity it would be if all this revenue should remain untapped just because one man had not time to attend to it, and he proposed that he should take out an expedition at his own cost and share the profits with the Crown.

This proposal was too tempting to be refused; unlike the expeditions of Columbus, which were all expenditure and no revenue, it promised a chance of revenue without any expenditure at all. The Paria coast, having been discovered subsequent to the agreement made with Columbus, was considered by Fonseca to be open to private enterprise; and he therefore granted Ojeda a licence to go and explore it. Among those who went with him were Amerigo Vespucci and Columbus's old pilot, Juan de la Cosa, as well as some of the sailors who had been with the Admiral on the coast of Paria and had returned in the caravels which had brought his account of it back to Spain. Ojeda sailed on May 20, 1499; made a landfall some hundreds of miles to the eastward of the Orinoco, coasted thence as far as the island of Trinidad, and sailed along the northern coast of the peninsula of Paria until he came to a country where the natives built their huts on piles in the water, and to which he gave the name of Venezuela. It was by his accidental presence on this voyage that Vespucci came to give his name to America—a curious story of international jealousies, intrigues, lawsuits, and lies which we have not the space to deal with here. After collecting a considerable quantity of pearls Ojeda, who was beginning to run short of provisions, turned

eastward again and sought the coast of Española, where we shall presently meet with him again.

And Ojeda was not the only person in Spain who was enticed by Columbus's glowing descriptions to go and look for the pearls of Paria. There was in fact quite a reunion of old friends of his and ours in the western ocean, though they went thither in a spirit far different from that of ancient friendship. Pedro Alonso Niño, who had also been on the Paria coast with Columbus, who had come home with the returning ships, and whose patience (for he was an exceedingly practical man) had perhaps been tried by the strange doings of the Admiral in the Gulf of Paria, decided that he as well as any one else might go and find some pearls. Niño was a poor man, having worked hard in all his voyagings backwards and forwards across the Atlantic; but he had a friend with money, one Luis Guerra, who provided him with the funds necessary for fitting out a small caravel about the size of his old ship the *Niña*. Guerra, who had the money, also had a brother Christoval; and his conditions were that Christoval should be given the command of the caravel. Practical Niño did not care so long as he reached the place where the pearls were. He also applied to Fonseca for licence to make discoveries; and, duly receiving it, sailed from Palos in the beginning of June 1499, hot upon the track of Ojeda.

They did a little quiet discovery, principally in the domain of human nature, caroused with the friendly natives, but attended to business all the time; with the result that in the following April they were back in Spain with a treasure of pearls out of which, after Niño had been made independent for life and Guerra, Christoval, and the rest of them had their shares, there remained a handsome sum for the Crown. An extremely practical, business-like voyage this; full of lessons for Columbus, could he have but known and learned them.

Yet another of our old friends profited by the Admiral's discovery. What Vincenti Yañez Pinzon has been doing all these years we have no record; living at Palos, perhaps, doing a little of his ordinary coasting business, administering the estates of his brother Martin Alonso, and, almost for a certainty, talking with some heat about whom it was that really did the

work in the discovery of the New World. Out of the obscurity of conjecture he emerges into fact in December 1499, when he is found at Palos fitting out four caravels for the purpose of exploring farther along the coast of the southern mainland. That he also was after pearls is pretty certain; but on the other hand he was more of a sailor than an adventurer, was a discoverer at heart, and had no small share of the family taste for sea travel. He took a more southerly course than any of the others, and struck the coast of America south of the equator on January 20, 1500. He sailed north past the mouths of the Amazon and Orinoco through the Gulf of Paria, and reached Española in June 1500. He only paused there to take in provisions, and sailed to the west in search of further discoveries; but he lost two of his caravels in a gale and had to put back to Española. He sailed thence for Palos, and reached home in September 1500, having added no inconsiderable share to the mass of new geographical knowledge that was being accumulated. In later years he took a high place in the maritime world of Spain.

And finally, to complete the account of the chief minor discoveries of these two busy years, we must mention Pedro Alvarez Cabral, of Portugal, who was despatched in March 1500 from Lisbon to verify the discoveries of Da Gama. He reached Calicut six months later, losing on the journey four of his caravels and most of his company. Among the lost was Bartholomew Diaz, the first discoverer of the Cape of Good Hope, who was on this voyage in a subordinate capacity, and whose bones were left to dissolve in the stormy waters that beat round the cape whose barrier he was the first to pass. The chief event of this voyage, however, was not the reaching of Calicut nor the drowning of Diaz, but the discovery of Brazil, which Cabral made in following the southerly course too far to the west. He landed there, in the Bay of Porto Seguro, on May 1, 1500, and took formal possession of the land for the Crown of Portugal, naming it Vera Cruz, or the Land of the True Cross.

In the assumption of Columbus and his contemporaries all these doings were held to detract from the glory of his own achievements, and were the subject of endless affidavits, depositions, quarrels, arguments, proofs, and claims in the great lawsuit that was in after years carried on between the Crown

of Spain and the heirs of Columbus concerning his titles and revenues. We, however, may take a different view. With the exception of the discoveries of the Cape of Good Hope and the coast of Brazil all these enterprises were directly traceable to Columbus's own achievements and were inspired by his example. The things that a man can do in his own person are limited by the laws of time and space; it is only example and influence that are infinite and illimitable, and in which the spirit of any achievement can find true immortality.

CHAPTER VII

THE THIRD VOYAGE—*continued*

IT may perhaps be wearisome to the reader to return to the tangled and depressing situation in Española, but it cannot be half so wearisome as it was for Columbus, whom we left enveloped in that dark cloud of error and surrender in which he sacrificed his dignity and good faith to the impudent demands of a mutinous servant. To his other troubles in San Domingo the presence of this Roldan was now added; and the reinstated Alcalde was not long in making use of the victory he had gained. He bore himself with intolerable arrogance and insolence, discharging one of Columbus's personal bodyguard on the ground that no one should hold any office on the island except with his consent. He demanded grants of land for himself and his followers, which Columbus held himself obliged to concede; and the Admiral, further to pacify him, invented a very disastrous system of *repartimientos*, under which certain chiefs were relieved from paying tribute on condition of furnishing feudal service to the settlers—a system which rapidly developed into the most cruel and oppressive kind of slavery. The Admiral at this time also, in despair of keeping things quiet by his old methods of peace and conciliation, created a kind of police force which roamed about the island, exacting tribute and meting out summary punishment to all defaulters. Among other concessions weakly made to Roldan at this time was the gift of the Crown estate of Esperanza, situated in the Vega Real, whither he betook himself, and where he embarked on what was nothing more nor less than a despotic reign, entirely ignoring the regulations and prerogatives of the Admiral, and taking prisoners and administering punishment just as he pleased. The Admiral was helpless, and thought of going back to Spain; but the condition of the island was such that he did not dare to leave it. Instead, he wrote a long letter to the Sovereigns, full of complaints against other people and justifications of himself, in the course of which he set forth those quibbling excuses for his capitulation to Roldan which

we have already heard. And there was a pathetic request at the end of the letter that his son Diego might be sent out to him. As I have said, Columbus was by this time a prematurely old man, and feeling the clouds gathering about him, and the loneliness and friendlessness of his position at Española, he instinctively looked to the next generation for help, and to the presence of his own son for sympathy and comfort.

It was at this moment (September 5, 1499) that a diversion arose in the rumour that four caravels had been seen off the western end of Española. The announcement, duly reported to the Admiral, was soon followed by the news that they were commanded by Ojeda, who was collecting dye-wood in the island forests. Columbus, although so far as we know he had no cause to suspect Ojeda, had little cause now to credit any adventurer with kindness towards himself; and Ojeda's secrecy in not reporting himself at San Domingo, and, in fact, his presence on the island at all without the knowledge of the Admiral, were sufficient evidence that he was there to serve his own ends. Some gleam of Christopher's old cleverness in handling men was now shown by his instructing Roldan to sally forth and bring Ojeda to order. It was a case of setting a thief to catch a thief, and, as it turned out, was not a bad stroke. Roldan, nothing loath, sailed round to that part of the coast where Ojeda's ships were anchored, and asked to see his licence; which was duly shown to him, and rather took the wind out of his sails. He heard a little gossip from Ojeda, moreover, which had its own significance for him. The Queen was ill; Columbus was in disgrace; there was talk of superseding him. Ojeda promised to sail round to San Domingo and report himself; but instead, he sailed to the east along the coast of Xaragua, where he got into communication with some discontented Spanish settlers and concocted a scheme for leading them to San Domingo to demand redress for their imagined grievances. Roldan, however, who had followed Ojeda, discovered him at this point; and there ensued some very pretty play between the two rascals, chiefly in trickery and treachery, such as capturing each other's boats and emissaries, laying traps for one another, and taking prisoner one another's crews. The end of it was that Ojeda left the island without having reported himself to Columbus, but not before he had completed his

business—which was that of provisioning his ships and collecting dye-wood and slaves.

And so *exit* Ojeda from the Columbian drama. Of his own drama only one more act remained to be played; which, for the sake of our past interest in him, we will mention here. Chiefly on account of his intimacy with Fonseca he was some years later given a governorship in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Darien; Juan de la Cosa accompanying him as unofficial partner. Ojeda has no sooner landed there than he is fighting the natives; natives too many for him this time; Ojeda forced to hide in the forest, where he finds the body of de la Cosa, who has come by a shocking death. Ojeda afterwards tries to govern his colony, but is no good at that; cannot govern his own temper, poor fellow. Quarrels with his crew, is put in irons, carried to Española, and dies there (1515) in great poverty and eclipse. One of the many, evidently, who need a strong guiding hand, and perish without it.

It really began to seem as though Roldan, having had his fling and secured the excessive privileges that he coveted, had decided that loyalty to Christopher was for the present the most profitable policy; but the mutinous spirit that he had cultivated in his followers for his own ends could not be so readily converted into this cheap loyalty. More trouble was yet to come of this rebellion. There was in the island a young Spanish aristocrat, Fernando de Guevara by name, one of the many who had come out in the hope of enjoying himself and making a fortune quickly, whose more than outrageously dissolute life in San Domingo had caused Columbus to banish him thence; and he was now living near Xaragua with a cousin of his, Adrian de Moxeca, who had been one of the ringleaders in Roldan's conspiracy. Within this pleasant province of Xaragua lived, as we have seen, Anacaona, the widow of Caonabo, the Lord of the House of Gold. She herself was a beautiful woman, called by her subjects Bloom of the Gold; and she had a still more beautiful daughter, Higuamota, who appears in history, like so many other women, on account of her charms and what came of them.

Of pretty Higuamota, who once lived like a dryad among the groves of Española and has been dead now for so long, we know nothing except that she was beautiful. Young Guevara, coming to stay with his cousin Adrian, becomes a visitor at

the house of Anacaona; sees the pretty daughter and falls in love with her. Other people also, it appears, have been in a similar state, but Higuamota is not very accessible; a fact which of course adds to the interest of the chase, and turns dissolute Fernando's idle preference into something like a passion. Roldan, who has also had an eye upon her, and apparently no more than an eye, discovers that Fernando, in order to gratify his passion, is proposing to go the absurd length of marrying the young woman, and has sent for a priest for that purpose. Roldan, instigated thereto by primitive forces, thinks it would be impolitic for a Spanish grandee to marry with a heathen; very well, then, Fernando will have her baptised—nothing simpler when water and a priest are handy. Roldan, seeing that the young man is serious, becomes peremptory, and orders him to leave Xaragua. Fernando ostentatiously departs, but is discovered a little later actually living in the house of Anacaona, who apparently is sympathetic to Love's young dream. Once more ordered away, this time with anger and threats, Guevara changes his tune and implores Roldan to let him stay, promising that he will give up the marriage project, and also, no doubt, the no-marriage project. But Guevara has sympathisers. The mutineers have not forgiven Roldan for deserting them and becoming a lawful instead of an unlawful ruler. They are all on the side of Guevara, who accordingly moves to the next stage of island procedure, and sets on foot some kind of plot to kill Roldan and the Admiral. Fortunately where there is treachery it generally works both ways; this plot came to the ears of the authorities; the conspirators were arrested and sent to San Domingo.

This action came near to bringing the whole island about Columbus's ears. Adrian de Moxeca was furious at what he conceived to be the treachery of Roldan, for Roldan was in such a pass that the barest act of duty was necessarily one of treachery to his friends. Moxeca took the place of chief rebel that Roldan had vacated, rallied the mutineers round him, and was on the point of starting for Concepçion, one of the chain of forts across the island where Columbus was at present staying, when the Admiral discovered his plan. All that was strongest and bravest in him rose up at this menace. His weakness and cowardice were forgotten; and with the spirit of an old sea-lion he sallied forth against the mutineers. He had only a dozen men on whom he could rely, but he armed them well and marched secretly and swiftly under cloud of night to the place where Moxeca and

his followers were encamped in fond security, and there suddenly fell upon them, capturing Moxeca and the chief ringleaders. The rest scattered in terror and escaped. Moxeca was hurried off to the battlements of San Domingo and there, in the very midst of a long-drawn, trembling confession to the priest in attendance, was swung off the ramparts and hanged. The others, although also condemned to death, were kept in irons in the fortress, while Christopher and Bartholomew, roused at last to vigorous action, scoured the island hunting down the remainder, killing some who resisted, hanging others on the spot, and imprisoning the remainder at San Domingo.

After these prompt measures peace reigned for a time in the island, and Columbus was perhaps surprised to see what wholesome effects could be produced by a little exemplary severity. The natives, who under the weakness of his former rule had been discontented and troublesome, now settled down submissively to their yoke; the Spaniards began to work in earnest on their farms; and there descended upon island affairs a brief St Martin's Summer of peace before the final winter of blight and death set in. The Admiral, however, was obviously in precarious health; his ophthalmia became worse, and the stability of his mind suffered. He had dreams and visions of divine help and comfort, much needed by him, poor soul, in all his tribulations and adversities. Even yet the cup was not full.

We must now turn back to Spain and try to form some idea of the way in which the doings of Columbus were being regarded there if we are to understand the extraordinary calamity that was soon to befall him. It must be remembered first of all that his enterprise had never really been popular from the first. It was carried out entirely by the energy and confidence of Queen Isabella, who almost alone of those in power believed in it as a thing which was certain to bring ultimate glory, as well as riches and dominion, to Spain and the Catholic faith. As we have seen, there had been a brief ebullition of popular favour when Columbus returned from his first voyage, but it was a popularity excited solely by the promises of great wealth that Columbus was continually holding forth. When those promises were not immediately fulfilled popular favour subsided; and when the adventurers who had gone out to the new islands on the strength of those promises had returned with shattered health and empty pockets there was less chance than ever of

the matter being regarded in its proper light by the people of Spain. Columbus had either found a gold mine or he had found nothing—that was the way in which the matter was popularly regarded. Those who really understood the significance of his discoveries and appreciated their scientific importance did not merely stay at home in Spain and raise a clamour; they went out in the Admiral's footsteps and continued the work that he had begun. Even King Ferdinand, for all his cleverness, had never understood the real lines on which the colony should have been developed. His eyes were fixed upon Europe; he saw in the discoveries of Columbus a means rather than an end, and looked to them simply as a source of revenue with the help of which he could carry on his ambitious schemes. And when, as other captains made voyages confirming and extending the work of Columbus, he did begin to understand the significance of what had been done, he realised too late that the Admiral had been given powers far in excess of what was prudent or sensible.

During all the time that Columbus and his brothers were struggling with the impossible situation at Española there was but one influence at work in Spain, and that was entirely destructive to the Admiral. Every caravel that came from the New World brought two things. It brought a crowd of discontented colonists, many of whom had grave reasons for their discontent; and it brought letters from the Admiral in which more and more promises were held out, but in which also querulous complaints against this and that person, and against the Spanish settlers generally, were set forth at wearisome length. It is not remarkable that the people of Spain, even those who were well disposed towards Columbus, began to wonder if these two things were not cause and effect. The settlers may have been a poor lot, but they were the material with which Columbus had to deal; he had powers enough, Heaven knew, powers of life and death; and the problem began to resolve itself in the minds of those at the head of affairs in Spain in the following terms. Given an island, rich and luxuriant beyond the dreams of man; given a native population easily subdued; given settlers of one kind or another; and given a Viceroy with unlimited powers—could he or could he not govern the island? It was a by no means unfair way of putting the case; and there is little justice in the wild abuse that has been hurled at Ferdinand and Isabella on this ground. Columbus may have been the greatest genius in the world; very possibly they admitted it;

but in the meanwhile Spain was resounding with the cries of the impoverished colonists who had returned from his ocean Paradise. No doubt the Sovereigns ignored them as much as they possibly could; but when it came to ragged, emaciated beggars coming in batches of fifty at a time and sitting in the very courts of the Alhambra, exhibiting bunches of grapes and saying that that was all they could afford to live upon since they had come back from the New World, some notice had to be taken of it. Even young Diego and Ferdinand, the Admiral's sons, came in for the obloquy with which his name was associated; the colonial vagabonds hung round the portals of the palace and cried out upon them as they passed so that they began to dislike going out. Columbus, as we know, had plenty of enemies who had access to the King and Queen; and never had enemies an easier case to urge. Money was continually being spent on ships and supplies; where was the return for it? What about the Ophir of Solomon? What about the Land of Spices? What about the pearls? And if you want to add a touch of absurdity, what about the Garden of Eden and the Great Khan?

To the most impartial eyes it began to appear as though Columbus were either an impostor or a fool. There is no evidence that Ferdinand and Isabella thought that he was an impostor or that he had wilfully deceived them; but there is some evidence that they began to have an inkling as to what kind of a man he really was, and as to his unfitness for governing a colony. Once more something had to be done. The sending out of a commissioner had not been a great success before, but in the difficulties of the situation it seemed the only thing. Still, there was a good deal of hesitation; and it is probable that Isabella was not yet fully convinced of the necessity for this grave step. This hesitation was brought to an end by the arrival from Española of the ships bearing the followers of Roldan, who had been sent back under the terms of Columbus's feeble capitulation. The same ships brought a great quantity of slaves, which the colonists were able to show had been brought by the permission of the Admiral; they carried native girls also, many of them pregnant, many with new-born babies; and these also came with the permission of the Admiral. The ships further carried the Admiral's letter complaining of the conspiracy of Roldan and containing the unfortunate request for a further licence to extend the slave trade. These circumstances were probably enough to turn the scale of Isa-

bella's opinion against the Admiral's administration. The presence of the slaves particularly angered her kind womanly heart. "What right has he to give away my vassals?" she exclaimed, and ordered that they should all be sent back, and that in addition all the other slaves who had come home should be traced and sent back; although of course it was impossible to carry out this last order.

At any rate there was no longer any hesitation about sending out a commissioner, and the Sovereigns chose one Francisco de Bobadilla, an official of the royal household, for the performance of this difficult mission. As far as we can decipher him he was a very ordinary official personage; prejudiced, it is possible, against an administration that had produced such disastrous results, and which offended his orderly official susceptibilities; otherwise to be regarded as a man exactly honest in the performance of what he conceived to be his duties, and entirely indisposed to allow sentiment or any other extraneous matter to interfere with such due performance. We shall have need to remember, when we see him at work in Española, that he was not sent out to judge between Columbus and his Sovereigns or between Columbus and the world, but to investigate the condition of the colony and to take what action he thought necessary. The commission which he bore to the Admiral was in the following terms:—

"The King and the Queen: Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral of the Ocean-sea. We have directed Francisco de Bobadilla, the bearer of this, to speak to you for us of certain things which he will mention: we request you to give him faith and credence and to obey him. From Madrid, May 26, '99. I THE KING. I THE QUEEN. By their command. Miguel Perez de Almazan."[1]

In addition Bobadilla bore with him papers and authorities giving him complete control and possession of all the forts, arms, and royal property in the island, in case it should be necessary for him to use them; and he also had a number of blank warrants which were signed, but the substance of which was not filled in. This may seem very dreadful to us, with our friendship for the poor Admiral; but considering the grave

[1] "El Rey é la Reina: D. Cristóbal Colon, nuestro Almirante del mar Océano: Nos habemos mandado al Comendador Francisco de Bobadilla, llevador desta, que vos hable de nuestra parte algunas cosas que él dirá: rogamos vos que le deis fe é creencia, y aquello pongais en obra. De Madrid á veinte y seis de Mayo, de noventa y neuve años. Yo EL REY. YO LA REINA. Por su mandado. Miguel Perez de Almazan."

state of affairs as represented to the King and Queen, who had their duties to their colonial subjects as well as to Columbus, there was nothing excessive in it. If they were to send out a commissioner at all, and if they were satisfied, as presumably they were, that the man they had chosen was trustworthy, it was only right to make his authority absolute. Thus equipped Francisco de Bobadilla sailed from Spain in July 1500.

BOOK IV

TOWARDS THE SUNSET

CHAPTER I

DEGRADATION

THE first things seen by the Spanish commissioner when he entered the harbour of San Domingo on the morning of the 23rd of August 1500 were the bodies of several Spaniards hanging from a gibbet near the water-side—a grim confirmation of what he had heard about the troubled state of the island. While he was waiting for the tide so that he might enter the harbour a boat put off from shore to ascertain who was on board the caravels; and it was thus informally that Bobadilla first announced that he had come to examine into the state of the island. Columbus was not at San Domingo, but was occupied in settling the affairs of the Vega Real; Bartholomew also was absent, stamping out the last smouldering embers of rebellion in Xaragua; and only James was in command to deal with this awkward situation.

Bobadilla did not go ashore the first day, but remained on board his ship receiving the visits of various discontented colonists who, getting early wind of the purpose of his visit, lost no time in currying favour with him. Probably he heard enough that first day to have damned the administration of a dozen islands; but also we must allow him some interest in the wonderful and strange sights that he was seeing; for Española, which has perhaps grown wearisome to us, was new to him. He had brought with him an armed bodyguard of twenty-five men, and in the other caravel were the returned slaves, babies included, under the charge of six friars. On the day following his arrival Bobadilla landed and heard Mass in state, afterwards reading out his commission to the assembled people. Evidently he had received a shocking impression of the state of affairs in the island; that is the only explanation of the action suddenly taken by him, for his first public act was to demand from James the release of all the prisoners in the fortress, in order that they and their accusers should appear before him.

James is in a difficulty; and, mule-like, since he does not know which way to turn, stands stock-still. He can do nothing,

he says, without the Admiral's consent. The next day Bobadilla, again hearing Mass in state, causes further documents to be read showing that a still greater degree of power had been entrusted to his hands. Mule-like, James still stands stock still; the greatest power on earth known to him is his eldest brother, and he will not, positively dare not, be moved by anything less than that. He refuses to give up the prisoners on any grounds whatsoever, and Bobadilla has to take the fortress by assault—an easy enough matter, since the resistance is but formal.

The next act of Bobadilla's is not quite so easy to understand. He quartered himself in Columbus's house; that perhaps was reasonable enough, since there may not have been another house in the settlement fit to receive him; but he also took possession of all his papers, public and private, and also seized the Admiral's store of money and began to pay his debts with it for him, greatly to the satisfaction of San Domingo. There is an element of the comic in this interpretation of a commissioner's powers; and it seemed as though he meant to wind up the whole Columbus business, lock, stock, and barrel. It would not be in accordance with our modern ideas of honour that a man's private papers should be seized unless he were suspected of treachery or some criminal act; but apparently Bobadilla regarded it as necessary. We must remember that although he had only heard one side of the case it was evidently so positive, and the fruits of misgovernment were there so visibly before his eyes, that no amount of evidence in favour of Columbus would make him change his mind as to his fitness to govern. Poor James, witnessing these things and unable to do anything to prevent them, finds himself suddenly relieved from the tension of the situation. Since inaction is his note, he shall be indulged in it; and he is clapped in irons and cast into prison. James can hardly believe the evidence of his senses. He has been studying theology lately, it appears, with a view to entering the Church and perhaps being some day made Bishop of Española, but this new turn of affairs looks as though there were to be an end of all careers for him, military and ecclesiastical alike.

Christopher at Fort Concepçion had early news of the arrival of Bobadilla, but in the hazy state of his mind he did not regard it as an event of sufficient importance to make his immediate presence at San Domingo advisable. The name of Bobadilla conveyed nothing to him; and when he heard that he had come to investigate, he thought that he came to set

right some disputed questions between the Admiral and other navigators as to the right of visiting Española and the Paria coast. As the days went on, however, he heard more disquieting rumours; grew at last uneasy, and moved to a fort nearer San Domingo in case it should be necessary for him to go there. An officer met him on the road bearing the proclamations issued by Bobadilla, but not the message from the Sovereigns requiring the Admiral's obedience to the commissioner. Columbus wrote to the commissioner a curious letter, which is not preserved, in which he sought to gain time; excusing himself from responsibility for the condition of the island, and assuring Bobadilla that, as he intended to return to Spain almost immediately, he (Bobadilla) would have ample opportunity for exercising his command in his absence. He also wrote to the Franciscan friars who had accompanied Bobadilla asking them to use their influence—the Admiral having some vague connection with the Franciscan order since his days at La Rabida.

No reply came to any of these letters, and Columbus sent word that he still regarded his authority as paramount in the island. For reply to this he received the Sovereigns' message to him which we have seen, commanding him to put himself under the direction of Bobadilla. There was no mistaking this; there was the order in plain words; and with I know not what sinkings of heart Columbus at last set out for San Domingo. Bobadilla had expected resistance; but the Admiral, whatever his faults, knew how to behave with dignity in a humiliating position, and he came into the city unattended to give himself up. On the outskirts of the town he was met by Bobadilla's guards, arrested, put in chains, and lodged in the fortress, the tower of which exists to this day. He seemed to himself to be the victim of a particularly petty and galling kind of treachery, for it was his own cook, a man called Espinoza, who riveted his gyves upon him.

There remained Bartholomew to be dealt with; and he, being at large and in command of the army, might not have proved such an easy conquest, but that Christopher, at Bobadilla's request, wrote and advised him to submit to arrest without any resistance. Whether Bartholomew acquiesced or not is uncertain; what is certain is that he also was captured and placed in irons, and imprisoned on one of the caravels. James in one caravel, Bartholomew in another, and Christopher in the

fortress, and all in chains—this is what it has come to with the three sons of old Domenico.

The trial was now begun, if trial that can be called which takes place in the absence of the culprit or his representative. It was rather the hearing of charges against Christopher and his brothers; and we may be sure that every discontented feeling in the island found voice and was formulated into some incriminating charge. Columbus was accused of oppressing the Spanish settlers by making them work at harsh and unnecessary labour; of cutting down their allowance of food, and restricting their liberty; of punishing them cruelly and unduly; of waging wars unjustly with the natives; of interfering with the conversion of the natives by hastily collecting them and sending them home as slaves; of having secreted treasures which should have been delivered to the Sovereigns—this last charge, like some of the others, true. He had an accumulation of pearls of which he had given no account to Fonseca, and the possession of which he excused by the queer statement that he was waiting to announce it until he could match it with an equal amount of gold. He was accused of hating the Spaniards, who were represented as having risen in the late rebellion in order to protect the natives and avenge their own wrongs; and generally of having abused his office in order to enrich his own family and gratify his own feelings. Bobadilla appeared to believe all these charges; or perhaps he recognised their nature, and yet saw that there was a sufficient degree of truth in them to disqualify the Admiral in his position as Viceroy. In all these affairs his right-hand man was Roldan, whose loyalty to Columbus, as we foresaw, had been short-lived. Roldan collects evidence; Roldan knows where he can lay his hands on this witness; Roldan produces this and that proof; Roldan is here, there, and everywhere—never had Bobadilla found such a useful, obliging man as Roldan. With his help Bobadilla soon collected a sufficient weight of evidence to justify in his own mind his sending Columbus home to Spain, and remaining himself in command of the island.

The caravels having been made ready, and all the evidence drawn up and documented, it only remained to embark the prisoners and despatch them to Spain. Columbus, sitting in his dungeon, suffering from gout and ophthalmia as well as from misery and humiliation, had heard no news; but he had heard the shouting of the people in the streets, the beating of drums and blowing of horns, and his own name and that of his brothers

uttered in derision; and he made sure that he was going to be executed. Alonso de Villegio, a nephew of Bishop Fonseca, had been appointed to take charge of the ships returning to Spain; and when he came into the prison the Admiral thought his last hour had come.

"Villegio," he asked sadly, "where are you taking me?"

"I am taking you to the ship, your Excellency, to embark," replied the other.

"To embark?" repeated the Admiral incredulously. "Villegio! are you speaking the truth?"

"By the life of your Excellency what I say is true," was the reply; and the news came with a wave of relief to the panic-stricken heart of the Admiral.

In the middle of October the caravels sailed from San Domingo; and the last sounds heard by Columbus from the land of his discovery were the hoots and jeers and curses hurled after him by the treacherous, triumphant rabble on the shore. Villegio treated him and his brothers with as much kindness as possible, and offered, when they had got well clear of Española, to take off the Admiral's chains. But Columbus, with a fine counterstroke of picturesque dignity, refused to have them removed. Already, perhaps, he had realised that his subjection to this cruel and quite unnecessary indignity would be one of the strongest things in his favour when he got to Spain, and he decided to suffer as much of it as he could. "My Sovereigns commanded me to submit to what Bobadilla should order. By his authority I wear these chains, and I shall continue to wear them until they are removed by order of the Sovereigns; and I will keep them afterwards as reminders of the reward I have received for my services." Thus the Admiral, beginning to pick up his spirits again, and to feel the better for the sea air.

The voyage home was a favourable one and in the course of it Columbus wrote the following letter to a friend of his at Court, Doña Juana de la Torre, who had been nurse to Prince Juan and was known by him to be a favourite of the Queen:—

"MOST VIRTUOUS LADY,—Though my complaint of the world is new, its habit of ill-using is very ancient. I have had a thousand struggles with it, and have thus far withstood them all, but now neither arms nor counsels avail me, and it cruelly keeps me under water. Hope in the Creator of all men sustains me: His help was always very ready; on another occasion, and not long ago, when I was still more overwhelmed,

He raised me with His right arm, saying, 'O man of little faith, arise: it is I; be not afraid.'

"I came with so much cordial affection to serve these Princes, and have served them with such service, as has never been heard of or seen.

"Of the new heaven and earth which our Lord made, when Saint John was writing the Apocalypse, after what was spoken by the mouth of Isaiah, He made me the messenger, and showed me where it lay. In all men there was disbelief, but to the Queen, my Lady, He gave the spirit of understanding, and great courage, and made her heiress of all, as a dear and much loved daughter. I went to take possession of all this in her royal name. They sought to make amends to her for the ignorance they had all shown by passing over their little knowledge and talking of obstacles and expenses. Her Highness, on the other hand, approved of it, and supported it as far as she was able.

"Seven years passed in discussion and nine in execution. During this time very remarkable and noteworthy things occurred whereof no idea at all had been formed. I have arrived at, and am in, such a condition that there is no person so vile but thinks he may insult me: he shall be reckoned in the world as valour itself who is courageous enough not to consent to it.

"If I were to steal the Indies or the land which lies towards them, of which I am now speaking, from the altar of Saint Peter, and give them to the Moors, they could not show greater enmity towards me in Spain. Who would believe such a thing where there was always so much magnanimity?

"I should have much desired to free myself from this affair had it been honourable towards my Queen to do so. The support of our Lord and of her Highness made me persevere: and to alleviate in some measure the sorrows which death had caused her, I undertook a fresh voyage to the new heaven and earth which up to that time had remained hidden; and if it is not held there in esteem like the other voyages to the Indies, that is no wonder, because it came to be looked upon as my work.

"The Holy Spirit inflamed Saint Peter and twelve others with him, and they all contended here below, and their toils and hardships were many, but last of all they gained the victory.

"This voyage to Paria I thought would somewhat appease them on account of the pearls, and of the discovery of gold in Española. I ordered the pearls to be collected and fished for by people with whom an arrangement was made that I should return for them, and, as I understood, they were to be measured by the bushel. If I did not write about this to their Highnesses, it was because I wished to have first of all done the same with the gold.

"The result to me in this has been the same as in many other things; I should not have lost them nor my honour, if I had sought my own advantage, and had allowed Española to be ruined, or if my privileges and contracts had been observed. And I say just the same about the gold which I had then collected, and [for] which with such great afflictions and toils I have, by divine power, almost perfected [the arrangements].

"When I went from Paria I found almost half the people from Española in revolt, and they have waged war against me until now, as

against a Moor ; and the Indians on the other side grievously [harassed me]. At this time Hojeda arrived and tried to put the finishing stroke : he said that their Highnesses had sent him with promises of gifts, franchises and pay : he gathered together a great band, for in the whole of Española there are very few save vagabonds, and not one with wife and children. This Hojeda gave me great trouble ; he was obliged to depart, and left word that he would soon return with more ships and people, and that he had left the Royal person of the Queen, our Lady, at the point of death. Then Vincenti Yañez arrived with four caravels ; there was disturbance and mistrust but no mischief : the Indians talked of many others at the Cannibals [Caribbee Islands] and in Paria ; and afterwards spread the news of six other caravels, which were brought by a brother of the Alcalde, but it was with malicious intent. This occurred at the very last, when the hope that their Highnesses would ever send any ships to the Indies was almost abandoned, nor did we expect them : and it was commonly reported that her Highness was dead.

" A certain Adrian about this time endeavoured to rise in rebellion again, as he had done previously, but our Lord did not permit his evil purpose to succeed. I had purposed in myself never to touch a hair of anybody's head, but I lament to say that with this man, owing to his ingratitude, it was not possible to keep that resolve as I had intended : I should not have done less to my brother, if he had sought to kill me, and steal the dominion which my King and Queen had given me in trust.

" This Adrian, as it appears, had sent Don Ferdinand to Xaragua to collect some of his followers, and there a dispute arose with the Alcalde from which a deadly contest ensued, and he [Adrian] did not effect his purpose. The Alcalde seized him and a part of his band, and the fact was that he would have executed them if I had not prevented it ; they were kept prisoners awaiting a caravel in which they might depart. The news of Hojeda which I told them made them lose the hope that he would now come again.

" For six months I had been prepared to return to their Highnesses, with the good news of the gold, and to escape from governing a dissolute people who fear neither God nor their King and Queen, being full of vices and wickedness.

" I could have paid the people in full with six hundred thousand, and for this purpose I had four millions of tenths and somewhat more, besides the third of the gold.

" Before my departure I many times begged their Highnesses to send there, at my expense, some one to take charge of the administration of justice ; and after finding the Alcalde in arms I renewed my supplications to have either some troops or at least some servant of theirs with letters patent ; for my reputation is such that even if I build churches and hospitals, they will always be called dens of thieves.

" They did indeed make provision at last, but it was the very contrary of what the matter demanded : it may be successful, since it was according to their good pleasure.

" I was there for two years without being able to gain a decree of favour for myself or for those who went there, yet this man brought a coffer full : whether they will all redound to their [Highnesses'] service, God knows. Indeed, to begin with, there are exemptions for twenty

years, which is a man's lifetime ; and gold is collected to such an extent that there was one person who became worth five marks in four hours ; whereof I will speak more fully later on.

"If it would please their Highnesses to remove the grounds of a common saying of those who know my labours, that the calumny of the people has done me more harm than much service and the maintenance of their [Highnesses'] property and dominion has done me good, it would be a charity, and I should be re-established in my honour, and it would be talked about all over the world : for the undertaking is of such a nature that it must daily become more famous and in higher esteem.

"When the Commander Bobadilla came to Santo Domingo, I was at La Vega, and the Adelantado at Xaragua, where that Adrian had made a stand, but then all was quiet, and the land rich and all men at peace. On the second day after his arrival, he created himself Governor, and appointed officers and made executions, and proclaimed immunities of gold and tenths and in general of everything else for twenty years, which is a man's lifetime, and that he came to pay everybody in full up to that day, even though they had not rendered service ; and he publicly gave notice that, as for me, he had charge to send me in irons, and my brothers likewise, as he has done, and that I should nevermore return thither, nor any other of my family : alleging a thousand disgraceful and discourteous things about me. All this took place on the second day after his arrival, as I have said, and while I was absent at a distance, without my knowing either of him or of his arrival.

"Some letters of their Highnesses signed in blank, of which he brought a number, he filled up and sent to the Alcalde and to his company with favours and commendations : to me he never sent either letter or messenger, nor has he done so to this day. Imagine what anyone holding my office would think when one who endeavoured to rob their Highnesses, and who has done so much evil and mischief, is honoured and favoured, while he who maintained it at such risks is degraded.

"When I heard this I thought that this affair would be like that of Hojeda or one of the others, but I restrained myself when I learnt for certain from the friars that their Highnesses had sent him. I wrote to him that his arrival was welcome, and that I was prepared to go to the Court and had sold all I possessed by auction ; and that with respect to the immunities he should not be hasty, for both that matter and the government I would hand over to him immediately as smooth as my palm. And I wrote to the same effect to the friars, but neither he nor they gave me any answer. On the contrary, he put himself in a warlike attitude, and compelled all who went there to take an oath to him as Governor ; and they told me that it was for twenty years.

"Directly I knew of these immunities, I thought that I would repair such a great error and that he would be pleased, for he gave them without the need of occasion necessary in so vast a matter : and he gave to vagabond people what would have been excessive for a man who had brought wife and children. So I announced by word and letters that he could not use his patents because mine were those in force ; and I showed them the immunities which John Aguado brought.

"All this was done by me in order to gain time, so that their Highnesses might be informed of the condition of the country, and that they

might have an opportunity of issuing fresh commands as to what would best promote their service in that respect.

"It is useless to publish such immunities in the Indies: to the settlers who have taken up residence it is a pure gain, for the best lands are given to them, and at a low valuation they will be worth two hundred thousand at the end of the four years when the period of residence is ended, without their digging a spadeful in them. I would not speak thus if the settlers were married, but there are not six among them all who are not on the look-out to gather what they can and depart speedily. It would be a good thing if they should go from Castile, and also if it were known who and what they are, and if the country could be settled with honest people.

"I had agreed with those settlers that they should pay the third of the gold, and the tenths, and this at their own request; and they received it as a great favour from their Highnesses. I reproved them when I heard that they ceased to do this, and hoped that the Commander would do likewise, and he did the contrary.

"He incensed them against me by saying that I wanted to deprive them of what their Highnesses had given them; and he endeavoured to set them at variance with me, and did so; and he induced them to write to their Highnesses that they should never again send me back to the government, and I likewise make the same supplication to them for myself and for my whole family, as long as there are not different inhabitants. And he together with them ordered inquisitions concerning me for wickedness the like whereof were never known in hell. Our Lord, who rescued Daniel and the three children, is present with the same wisdom and power as he had then, and with the same means, if it should please Him and be in accordance with His will.

"I should know how to remedy all this, and the rest of what has been said and has taken place since I have been in the Indies, if my disposition would allow me to seek my own advantage, and if it seemed honourable to me to do so, but the maintenance of justice and the extension of the dominion of her Highness has hitherto kept me down. Now that so much gold is found, a dispute arises as to which brings more profit, whether to go about robbing or to go to the mines. A hundred castellanos are as easily obtained for a woman as for a farm, and it is very general, and there are plenty of dealers who go about looking for girls: those from nine to ten are now in demand, and for all ages a good price must be paid.

"I assert that the violence of the calumny of turbulent persons has injured me more than my services have profited me; which is a bad example for the present and for the future. I take my oath that a number of men have gone to the Indies who did not deserve water in the sight of God and of the world; and now they are returning thither, and leave is granted them.

"I assert that when I declared that the Commander could not grant immunities, I did what he desired, although I told him that it was to cause delay until their Highnesses should receive information from the country, and should command anew what might be for their service.

"He excited their enmity against me, and he seems, from what took place and from his behaviour, to have come as my enemy and as a very vehement one; or else the report is true that he has spent much to

obtain this employment. I do not know more about it than what I hear. I never heard of an inquisitor gathering rebels together and accepting them, and others devoid of credit and unworthy of it, as witnesses against their Governor.

"If their Highnesses were to make a general inquisition there, I assure you that they would look upon it as a great wonder that the island does not founder.

"I think your Ladyship will remember that when, after losing my sails, I was driven into Lisbon by a tempest, I was falsely accused of having gone there to the King in order to give him the Indies. Their Highnesses afterwards learned the contrary, and that it was entirely malicious.

"Although I may know but little, I do not think anyone considers me so stupid as not to know that even if the Indies were mine I could not uphold myself without the help of some Prince.

"If this be so, where could I find better support and security than in the King and Queen, our Lords, who have raised me from nothing to such great honour, and are the most exalted Princes of the world on sea and on land, and who consider that I have rendered them service, and who preserve to me my privileges and rewards: and if anyone infringes them, their Highnesses increase them still more, as was seen in the case of John Aguado; and they order great honour to be conferred upon me, and, as I have already said, their Highnesses have received service from me, and keep my sons in their household; all which could by no means happen with another prince, for where there is no affection, everything else fails.

"I have now spoken thus in reply to a malicious slander, but against my will, as it is a thing which should not recur to memory even in dreams; for the Commander Bobadilla maliciously seeks in this way to set his own conduct and actions in a brighter light; but I shall easily show him that his small knowledge and great cowardice, together with his inordinate cupidity, have caused him to fail therein.

"I have already said that I wrote to him and to the friars, and immediately set out, as I told him, almost alone, because all the people were with the Adelantado, and likewise in order to prevent suspicion on his part. When he heard this, he seized Don Diego and sent him on board a caravel loaded with irons, and did the same to me upon my arrival, and afterwards to the Adelantado when he came; nor did I speak to him any more, nor to this day has he allowed any one to speak to me; and I take my oath that I cannot understand why I am made a prisoner.

"He made it his first business to seize the gold, which he did without measuring or weighing it and in my absence; he said that he wanted it to pay the people, and according to what I hear he assigned the chief part to himself and sent fresh exchangers for the exchanges. Of this gold I had put aside certain specimens, very big lumps, like the eggs of geese, hens, and pullets, and of many other shapes, which some persons had collected in a short space of time, in order that their Highnesses might be gladdened, and might comprehend the business upon seeing a quantity of large stones full of gold. This collection was the first to be given away, with malicious intent, so that their Highnesses should not hold the matter in any account until he has feathered his nest, which he is in

great haste to do. Gold which is for melting diminishes at the fire ; some chains which would weigh about twenty marks have never been seen again.

"I have been more distressed about this matter of the gold than even about the pearls, because I have not brought it to her Highness.

"The Commander at once set to work upon anything which he thought would injure me. I have already said that with six hundred thousand I could pay every one without defrauding anybody, and that I had more than four millions of tenths and constabulary [dues] without touching the gold. He made some free gifts which are ridiculous, though I believe that he began by assigning the chief part to himself. Their Highnesses will find it out when they order an account to be obtained from him, especially if I should be present thereat. He does nothing but reiterate that a large sum is owing, and it is what I have said, and even less. I have been much distressed that there should be sent concerning me an inquisitor who is aware that if the inquisition which he returns is very grave he will remain in possession of the government.

"Would that it had pleased our Lord that their Highnesses had sent him or some one else two years ago, for I know that I should now be free from scandal and infamy, and that my honour would not be taken from me, nor should I lose it. God is just, and will make known the why and the wherefore.

"They judge me over there as they would a governor who had gone to Sicily, or to a city or town placed under regular government, and where the laws can be observed in their entirety without fear of ruining everything ; and I am greatly injured thereby.

"I ought to be judged as a captain who went from Spain to the Indies to conquer a numerous and warlike people, whose customs and religion are very contrary to ours ; who live in rocks and mountains, without fixed settlements, and not like ourselves : and where, by the Divine Will, I have placed under the dominion of the King and Queen, our Sovereigns, a second world, through which Spain, which was reckoned a poor country, has become the richest.

"I ought to be judged as a captain who for such a long time up to this day has borne arms without laying them aside for an hour, and by gentlemen adventurers and by custom, and not by letters, unless they were from Greeks or Romans or others of modern times of whom there are so many and such noble examples in Spain ; or otherwise I receive great injury, because in the Indies there is neither town nor settlement.

"The gate to the gold and pearls is now open, and plenty of everything—precious stones, spices and a thousand other things—may be surely expected, and never could a worse misfortune befall me : for by the name of our Lord the first voyage would yield them just as much as would the traffic of Arabia Felix as far as Mecca, as I wrote to their Highnesses by Antonio de Torres in my reply respecting the repartition of the sea and land with the Portuguese ; and afterwards it would equal that of Calicut, as I told them and put in writing at the monastery of the Mejorada.

"The news of the gold that I said I would give is, that on the day of the Nativity, while I was much tormented, being harassed by wicked Christians and by Indians, and when I was on the point of giving up everything, and if possible escaping from life, our Lord miraculously

comforted me and said, 'Fear not violence, I will provide for all things: the seven years of the term of the gold have not elapsed, and in that and in everything else I will afford thee a remedy.'

"On that day I learned that there were eighty leagues of land with mines at every point thereof. The opinion now is that it is all one. Some have collected a hundred and twenty castellanos in one day, and others ninety, and even the number of two hundred and fifty has been reached. From fifty to seventy, and in many more cases from fifteen to fifty, is considered a good day's work, and many carry it on. The usual quantity is from six to twelve, and anyone obtaining less than this is not satisfied. It seems to me that these mines are like others, and do not yield equally every day. The mines are new, and so are the workers: it is the opinion of everybody that even if all Castile were to go there, every individual, however inexpert he might be, would not obtain less than one or two castellanos daily, and now it is only commencing. It is true that they keep Indians, but the business is in the hands of the Christians. Behold what discernment Bobadilla had, when he gave up everything for nothing, and four millions of tenths, without any reason or even being requested, and without first notifying it to their Highnesses. And this is not the only loss.

"I know that my errors have not been committed with the intention of doing evil, and I believe that their Highnesses regard the matter just as I state it: and I know and see that they deal mercifully even with those who act maliciously to their disservice. I believe and consider it very certain that their clemency will be both greater and more abundant towards me, for I fell therein through ignorance and the force of circumstances, as they will know fully hereafter; and I indeed am their creature, and they will look upon my services, and will acknowledge day by day that they are much profited. They will place everything in the balance, even as Holy Scripture tells us good and evil will be at the day of judgment.

"If, however, they command that another person do judge me, which I cannot believe, and that it be by inquisition in the Indies, I very humbly beseech them to send thither two conscientious and honourable persons at my expense, who I believe will easily, now that gold is discovered, find five marks in four hours. In either case it is needful for them to provide for this matter.

"The Commander on his arrival at San Domingo took up his abode in my house, and just as he found it so he appropriated everything to himself. Well and good; perhaps he was in want of it. A pirate never acted thus towards a merchant. About my papers I have a greater grievance, for he has so completely deprived me of them that I have never been able to obtain a single one from him; and those that would have been most useful in my exculpation are precisely those which he has kept most concealed. Behold the just and honest inquisitor! Whatever he may have done, they tell me that there has been an end of justice, except in an arbitrary form. God, our Lord, is present with His strength and wisdom, as of old, and always punishes in the end, especially ingratitude and injuries."[24]

We must keep in mind the circumstances in which this letter was written if we are to judge it and the writer wisely.

It is a sad example of querulous complaint, in which everything but the writer's personal point of view is ignored. No one indeed is more terrible in this world than the Man with a Grievance. How rarely will human nature in such circumstances retire into the stronghold of silence! Columbus is asking for pity; but as we read his letter we incline to pity him on grounds quite different from those which he represented. He complains that the people he was sent to govern have waged war against him as against a Moor; he complains of Ojeda and of Vincenti Yañez Pinzon; of Adrian de Moxeca, and of every other person whom it was his business to govern and hold in restraint. He complains of the colonists—the very people, some of them, whom he himself took and impressed from the gaols and purlieus of Cadiz; and then he mingles pious talk about Saint Peter and Daniel in the den of lions with notes on the current price of little girls and big lumps of gold like the eggs of geese, hens, and pullets. He complains that he is judged as a man would be judged who had been sent out to govern a ready-made colony, and represents instead that he went out to conquer a numerous and warlike people "whose custom and religion are very contrary to ours, and who lived in rocks and mountains"; forgetting that when it suited him for different purposes he described the natives as so peaceable and unwarlike that a thousand of them would not stand against one Christian, and that in any case he was sent out to create a constitution and not merely to administer one. But consider also the justice of many of his complaints, and the odds against which he was fighting; remember too the thread of sincerity that runs through all the pleading. "I know that my errors have not been committed with the intention of doing evil."

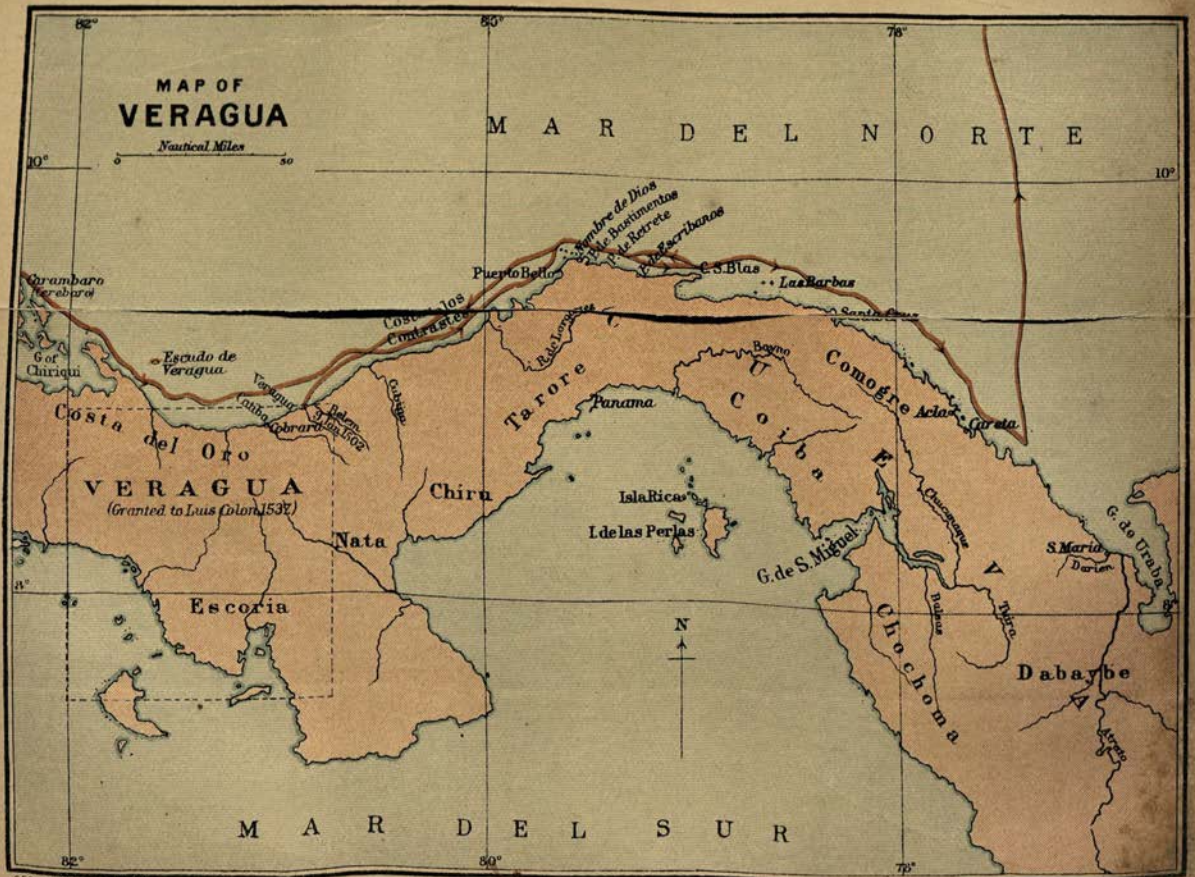
Very sore indeed is Christopher as he reveals himself in this letter, appealing now to his correspondent, now to the King and Queen, now to that God who is always on the side of the complainant. "God our Lord is present with His strength and wisdom, as of old, and always punishes in the end, especially ingratitude and injuries." Not boastfulness and weakness, let us hope, or the Admiral will come off badly.

CHAPTER II

CRISIS IN THE ADMIRAL'S LIFE

COLUMBUS was not far wrong in his estimate of the effect likely to be produced by his manacles, and when the ships of Villegio arrived at Cadiz in October 1500 the spectacle of an Admiral in chains produced a degree of commiseration which must have exceeded his highest hopes. He was now in his fiftieth year and of an extremely venerable appearance, his kindling eye looking forth from under brows of white, his hair and beard snow-white, his face lined and spiritualised with suffering and sorrow. It must be remembered that before the Spanish people he had always appeared in more or less state. They had not that intimacy with him, an intimacy which perhaps brought contempt, which the people in Española enjoyed; and in Spain, therefore, the contrast between his former grandeur and this condition of shame and degradation was the more striking. It was a fact that the people of Spain could not neglect. It touched their sense of the dramatic and picturesque, touched their hearts also perhaps—hearts quick to burn, quick to forget. They had forgotten him before; now they burned with indignation at the picture of this venerable and much-suffering man arriving in disgrace.

His letter to Doña Juana, hastily despatched by him, probably through the office of some friendly soul on board, immediately on his arrival at Cadiz, was the first news from the ship received by the King and Queen, and naturally it caused them a shock of surprise. It was followed by the despatches from Bobadilla, and by a letter from the Alcalde of Cadiz announcing that Columbus and his brothers were in his custody awaiting the royal orders. Perhaps Ferdinand and Isabella had already repented their drastic action and had entertained some misgivings as to its results; but it is more probable that they had put it out of their heads altogether, and that their hasty action now was prompted as much by the shock of being recalled to a consciousness of the troubled state of affairs in the New World as by any real regret for what they had done.



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Course plotted from Sir Clements Markham's "Christopher Columbus."

Moreover, they had sent out Bobadilla to quiet things down; and the first result of it was that Spain was ringing with the scandal of the Admiral's treatment. In that Spanish world, unsteadfast and unstable, when one end of the see-saw was up the other must be down; and it was Columbus who now found himself high up in the heavens of favour, and Bobadilla who was seated in the dust. Equipoise of any kind was apparently a thing impossible; if one man was right the other must be wrong; no excuses for Bobadilla; every excuse for the Admiral.

The first official act, therefore, was an order for the immediate release of the Admiral and his brothers, followed by an invitation for him to proceed without delay to the Court at Granada, and an order for the immediate payment to him of the sum of 2000 ducats [1]—this last no ungenerous gift to a Viceroy whose pearl accounts were in something less than order. Perhaps Columbus had cherished the idea of appearing dramatically before the very Court in his rags and chains; but the cordiality of their letter as well as the gift of money made this impossible. Instead, not being a man to do things by halves, he equipped himself in his richest and most splendid garments, got together the requisite number of squires and pages, and duly presented himself at Granada in his full dignity. The meeting was an affecting one, touched with a humanity which has survived the intervening centuries, as a touch of true humanity will when details of mere parade and etiquette have long perished. Perhaps the Admiral, inspired with a deep sense of his wrongs, meant to preserve a very stiff and cold demeanour at the beginning of this interview; but when he looked into the kind eyes of Isabella and saw them suffused with tears at the thought of his sorrows all his dignity broke down; the tears came to his own eyes, and he wept there naturally, like a child. Ferdinand looking on kind but uncomfortable; Isabella unaffectedly touched and weeping; the Admiral, in spite of his scarlet cloak and golden collar and jewelled sword, in spite of equerries, squires, pages, and attendants, sobbing on his knees like a child or an old man—these were the scenes and kindly emotions of this historic moment.

The tears were stanched by kindly royal words and handkerchiefs supplied by attendant pages; sobbings breaking out

[1] Equivalent to £569, or $2846. At the present day equivalent to £3400, or $17,000.

again, but on the whole soon quieted; King and Queen raising the gouty Christopher from his knees, filling the air with kind words of sympathy, praise, and encouragement; the lonely, worn heart, somewhat arid of late, and parched from want of human sympathy, much refreshed by this dew of kindness. The Admiral was soon himself again, and he would not have been himself if upon recovering he had not launched out into what some historians call a "lofty and dignified vindication of his loyalty and zeal." No one, indeed, is better than the Admiral at such lofty and dignified vindications. He goes into the whole matter and sets forth an account of affairs at Española from his own point of view; and can even (so high is the thermometer of favour) safely indulge in a little judicious self-depreciation, saying that if he has erred it has not been from want of zeal but from want of experience in dealing with the kind of material he has been set to govern. All this is very human, natural, and understandable; product of that warm emotional atmosphere, bedewed with tears, in which the Admiral finds himself; and it is not long before the King and Queen, also moved to it by the emotional temperature, are expressing their unbroken and unbounded confidence in him and repudiating the acts of Bobadilla, which they declare to have been contrary to their instructions; undertaking also that he shall be immediately dismissed from his post. Bobadilla is not here in the warm emotional atmosphere; he had his turn of it six months ago, when no powers were too high or too delicate to be entrusted to him; he is out in the cold at the other end of the see-saw, which has let him down to the ground with a somewhat sudden thump.

Columbus, relying on the influence of these emotions, made bold to ask that his property in the island should be restored to him, which was immediately granted; and also to request that he should be reinstated in his office of Viceroy and allowed to return at once in triumph to Española. But emotions are unstable things; they present a yielding surface which will give to any extent, but which, when it has hardened again after the tears have evaporated, is often found to be in much the same condition as before. At first promises were made that the whole matter should be fully gone into; but when it came to cold fact, Ferdinand was obliged to recognise that this whole business of discovery and colonisation had become a very different thing

from what it had been when Columbus was the only discoverer; and he was obviously of opinion that, as Columbus's office had once been conveniently withdrawn from him, it would only be disastrous to reinstate him in it. Of course he did not say so at once; but reasons were given for judicious delay in the Admiral's reappointment. It was represented to him that the colony, being in an extremely unsettled state, should be given a short period of rest, and also that it would be as well for him to wait until the people who had given him so much trouble in the island could be quietly and gradually removed. Two years was the time mentioned as suitable for an interregnum; and it is probable that it was the intention of Isabella, although not of Ferdinand, to restore Columbus to his office at the end of that time.

In the meantime it became necessary to appoint some one to supersede Bobadilla; for the news that arrived periodically from Española during the year 1501 showed that he had entirely failed in his task of reducing the island to order. For the wholesome if unequal rigours of Columbus Bobadilla had substituted laxness and indulgence, with the result that the whole colony was rapidly reduced to a state of the wildest disorder. Vice and cruelty were rampant; in fact the barbarities practised upon the natives were so scandalous that even Spanish opinion, which was never very sympathetic to heathen suffering, was thoroughly shocked and alarmed. The Sovereigns therefore appointed Nicholas de Ovando to go out and take over the command, with instructions to use very drastic means for bringing the colony to order. How he did it we shall presently see; in the meantime all that was known of him (the man not having been tried yet) was that he was a poor knight of Calatrava, a man respected in royal circles for the performance of minor official duties, but no very popular favourite; honest according to his lights—lights turned rather low and dim, as was often the case in those days. A narrow-minded man also, without sympathy or imagination, capable of cruelty; a tough, stiff-necked stock of a man, fit to deal with Bobadilla perhaps, but hardly fit to deal with the colony. Spain in those days was not a nursery of administration. Of all the people who were sent out successively to govern Española and supersede one another, the only one who really seems to have had the necessary natural ability, had he but been given the power, was Bartholo-

mew Columbus; but unfortunately things were in such a state that the very name of Columbus was enough to bar a man from acceptance as a governor of Española.

It was not for any lack of powers and equipment that this procession of governors failed in their duties. We have seen with what authority Bobadilla had been entrusted; and Ovando had even greater advantages. The instructions he received showed that the needs of the new colonies were understood by Ferdinand and Isabella, if by no one else. Ovando was not merely appointed Governor of Española but of the whole of the new territory discovered in the west, his seat of government being San Domingo. He was given the necessary free hand in the matters of punishment, confiscation, and allotment of lands. He was to revoke the orders which had been made by Bobadilla reducing the proportion of gold payable to the Crown, and was empowered to take over one-third of the gold that was stored on the island, and one-half of what might be found in the future. The Crown was to have a monopoly of all trade, and ordinary supplies were only to be procured through the Crown agent. On the other hand, the natives were to be released from slavery, and although forced to work in the mines, were to be paid for their labour—a distinction which in the working out did not produce much difference. A body of Franciscan monks accompanied Ovando for the purpose of tackling the religious question with the necessary energy; and every regulation that the kind heart of Isabella could think of was made for the happiness and contentment of the Indians.

Unhappily the real mischief had already been done. The natives, who had never been accustomed to hard and regular work under the conditions of commerce and greed, but had only toiled for the satisfaction of their own simple wants, were suffering cruelly under the hard labour in the mines, and the severe driving of their Spanish masters. Under these unnatural conditions the native population was rapidly dying off, and there was some likelihood that there would soon be a scarcity of native labour. These were the circumstances in which the idea of importing black African labour to the New World was first conceived—a plan which was destined to have results so tremendous that we have probably not yet seen their full development. There were a great number of African negro slaves at that time in Spain; a whole generation of them had been born in slavery in Spain itself; and this generation was bodily imported to Española to relieve and assist the native labour.

These preparations were not made all at once; and it was more than a year after the return of Columbus before Ovando was ready to sail. In the meantime Columbus was living in Granada, and looking on with no very satisfied eye at the plans which were being made to supersede him, and about which he was probably not very much consulted; feeling very sore indeed, and dividing his attention between the nursing of his grievances and other even less wholesome occupations. There was any amount of smiling kindness for him at Court, but very little of the satisfaction that his vanity and ambition craved; and in the absence of practical employment he fell back on visionary speculations. He made great friends at this time with a monk named Gaspar Gorricio, with whose assistance he began to make some kind of a study of such utterances of the Prophets and the Fathers as he conceived to have a bearing on his own career.

Columbus was in fact in a very queer way at this time; and what with his readings and his meditatings and his grievances, and his visits to his monkish friend in the convent of Las Cuevas, he fell into a kind of intellectual stupor, of which the work called "Libro de las Profecias," or Book of the Prophecies, in which he wrote down such considerations as occurred to him in his stupor, was the result. The manuscript of this work is in existence, although no human being has ever ventured to reprint the whole of it; and we would willingly abstain from mentioning it here if it were not an undeniable act of Columbus's life. The Admiral, fallen into a mental quagmire, puts down certain figures upon paper; discovers that St Augustine said that the world would only last for 7000 years; finds that some other genius had calculated that before the birth of Christ it had existed for 5343 years and 318 days; adds 1501 years from the birth of Christ to his own time; adds up, and finds that the total is 6844 years; subtracts, and discovers that this earthly globe can only last 155 years longer. He remembers also that, still according to the Prophets, certain things must happen before the end of the world; Holy Sepulchre restored to Christianity, heathen converted, second coming of Christ; and decides that he himself is the man appointed by God and promised by the Prophets to perform these works. Good Heavens! in what an entirely dark and sordid stupor is the Admiral now sunk—a veritable slough and quag of stupor out of which, if he does not manage to flounder himself, no human hand can pull him.

But amid his wallowings in this slough of stupor, when all else in him had been well-nigh submerged by it, two dim lights were preserved towards which, although foundered up to the chin, he began to struggle; and by superhuman efforts did at last extricate himself from the theological stupor and get himself blown clean again by the salt winds before he died. One light was his religion; not to be confounded with theological stupor, but quite separate from it in my belief; a certain steadfast and consuming faith in a Power that could see and understand and guide him to the accomplishment of his purpose. This faith had been too often a good friend and help to Christopher for him to forget it very long, even while he was staggering in the quag with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Fathers; and gradually, as I say, he worked himself out into the region of activity again. First, thinking it a pity that his flounderings in the slough should be entirely wasted, he had a copy of his precious theological work made and presented it to the Sovereigns, with a letter urging them (since he himself was unable to do it) to undertake a crusade for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre—not an altogether wild proposal in those days. But Ferdinand had other uses for his men and his money, and contented himself with despatching Peter Martyr on a pacific mission to the Grand Soldan of Egypt.

The other light left unquenched in Columbus led him back to the firm ground of maritime enterprise; he began to long for the sea again, and for a chance of doing something to restore his reputation. An infinitely better and more wholesome frame of mind, this; and he now addressed himself to the task of getting himself chosen by men to do something which should raise him again in their esteem.

His maritime ambition was no doubt stimulated at this time by witnessing the departure of Ovando, in February 1502, with a fleet of thirty-five ships and a company of 2500 people. It was not in the Admiral's nature to look on without envy at an equipment the like of which he himself had never been provided with; and he did not restrain his sarcasms at its pomp and grandeur, nor at the ease with which men could follow a road which had once been pointed out to them. Ovando had a great bodyguard such as Columbus had never had; and he also carried with him a great number of picked married men with their families, all with knowledge of some trade or craft,

whose presence in the colony would be a guarantee of permanence and steadiness. Columbus remembered his own crowd of ruffians and gaol-birds, and realised the bitterness of his own mistakes. It was a very painful moment for him; and he was only partially reconciled to it by the issue of a royal order to Ovando under which he was required to see to the restoration of the Admiral's property. If it had been devoted to public purposes it was to be repaid him from the royal funds; but if it had been merely distributed among the colonists Bobadilla was to be made responsible for it. The Admiral was also allowed to send out an agent to represent him and look after his interests; and he appointed Alonso de Carvajal to this office.

Ovando once gone, the Admiral could turn again to his own affairs. It is true there were rumours that the whole fleet had perished, for it encountered a gale very soon after leaving Cadiz, and a great quantity of the deck hamper was thrown overboard and was washed on the shores of Spain; and the Sovereigns were so bitterly distressed that, as it is said, they shut themselves up for eight days. News eventually came, however, that only one ship had been lost, and that the rest had proceeded safely to San Domingo. Columbus, much recovered in body and mind, now began to apply for a fleet for himself. He had heard of the discovery by the Portuguese of the southern route to India; no doubt he had heard also much gossip of the results of the many private voyages of discovery that were sailing from Spain at this time; and he began to think seriously about his own discoveries and the way in which they might best be extended. He thought much of his voyage to the west of Trinidad and of the strange pent-up seas and currents that he had discovered there. He remembered the continual westward trend of the current, and how all the islands in that sea had their greatest length east and west, as though their shores had been worn into that shape by the constant flowing of the current; and it was not an unnatural conclusion for him to suppose that there was a channel far to the west through which these seas poured and which would lead him to the Golden Chersonesus. He put away from him that nightmare madness that he transacted on the coast of Cuba. He knew very well that he had not yet found the Golden Chersonesus and the road to India; but he became convinced that the western current

would lead him there if only he followed it long enough. There was nothing insane about this theory; it was in fact a very well-observed and well-reasoned argument; and the fact that it happened to be entirely wrong is no reflection on the Admiral's judgment. The great Atlantic currents at that time had not been studied; and how could he know that the western stream of water was the northern half of a great ocean current which sweeps through the Caribbean Sea, into and round the Gulf of Mexico, and flows out northward past Florida in the Gulf Stream?

His applications for a fleet were favourably received by the King and Queen, but much frowned upon by certain high officials of the Court. They were beginning to regard Columbus as a dangerous adventurer who, although he happened to have discovered the western islands, had brought the Spanish colony there to a dreadful state of disorder; and had also, they alleged, proved himself rather less than trustworthy in matters of treasure. Still, in the summer days of 1501 he had made himself very troublesome at Court with constant petitions and letters about his rights and privileges; and Ferdinand was far from unwilling to adopt a plan by which they would at least get rid of him and keep him safely occupied at the other side of the world at the cost of a few caravels. There was, besides, always an element of uncertainty. His voyage might come to nothing; but on the other hand the Admiral was no novice at this game of discovery, and one could not tell but that something big might come of it. After some consideration permission was given to him to fit out a fleet of four ships, and he proceeded to Seville in the autumn of 1501 to get his little fleet ready. Bartholomew was to come with him, and his son Ferdinand also, who seems to have much endeared himself to the Admiral in these dark days, and who would surely be a great comfort to him on the voyage. Beatriz Enriquez seems to have passed out of his life; certainly he was not living with her either now or on his last visit to Spain; one way or another, that affair was at an end for him. Perhaps Beatriz, seeing her son in such a high place at Court, had effaced herself for his sake; perhaps the appointment was given on condition of such effacement; we do not know.

Columbus was in no hurry over his preparations. In the midst of them he found time to collect a whole series of docu-

ments relating to his titles and dignities, which he had copied and made into a great book which he called his "Book of Privileges," and the copies of which were duly attested before a notary at Seville on January 5, 1502. He wrote many letters to various friends of his, chiefly in relation to these privileges; not interesting or illuminating letters to us, although very important to busy Christopher when he wrote them. Here is one written to Nicolo Oderigo, a Genoese Ambassador who came to Spain on a brief mission in the spring of 1502, and who, with certain other residents in Spain, is said to have helped Columbus in his preparations for his fourth voyage:—

"SIR,—The loneliness in which you have left us cannot be described. I gave the book containing my writings to Francisco de Rivarol that he may send it to you with another copy of letters containing instructions. I beg you to be so kind as to write Don Diego in regard to the place of security in which you put them. Duplicates of everything will be completed and sent to you in the same manner and by the same Francisco. Among them you will find a new document. Their Highnesses promised to give all that belongs to me and to place Don Diego in possession of everything, as you will see. I wrote to Señor Juan Luis and to Señora Catalina. The letter accompanies this one. I am ready to start in the name of the Holy Trinity as soon as the weather is good. I am well provided with everything. If Jeronimo de Santi Esteban is coming, he must await me and not embarrass himself with anything, for they will take away from him all they can and silently leave him. Let him come here and the King and the Queen will receive him until I come. May our Lord have you in His holy keeping.

"Done at Seville, March 21, 1502.

"At your command.

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Xpo FERENS."

His delays were not pleasing to Ferdinand, who wanted to get rid of him, and he was invited to hurry his departure; but he still continued to go deliberately about his affairs, which he tried to put in order as far as he was able, since he thought it not unlikely that he might never see Spain again. Thinking thus of his worldly duties, and his thoughts turning to his native Genoa, it occurred to him to make some benefaction out of the riches that were coming to him by which his name might be remembered and held in honour there. This was a piece of practical kindness the record of which is most precious to us; for it shows the Admiral in a truer and more human light than he often allowed to shine upon him. The tone of the letter is

nothing; he could not forbear letting the people of Genoa see how great he was. The devotion of his legacy to the reduction of the tax on simple provisions was a genuine charity, much to be appreciated by the dwellers in the Vico Dritto di Ponticello, where wine and provision shops were so very necessary to life. The letter was written to the Directors of the famous Bank of Saint George at Genoa.

"VERY NOBLE LORDS,—Although my body is here, my heart is continually yonder. Our Lord has granted me the greatest favour he has granted anyone since the time of David. The results of my undertaking already shine, and they would make a great light if the obscurity of the Government did not conceal them. I shall go again to the Indies in the name of the Holy Trinity, to return immediately. And as I am mortal, I desire my son Don Diego to give to you each year, for ever, the tenth part of all the income received, in payment of the tax on wheat, wine, and other provisions. If this tenth amounts to anything, receive it, and if not, receive my will for the deed. I beg you as a favour to have this son of mine in your charge. Nicolo de Oderigo knows more about my affairs than I myself. I have sent him the copy of my privileges and letters, that he may place them in safe keeping. I would be glad if you could see them. The King and the Queen, my Lords, now wish to honour me more than ever. May the Holy Trinity guard your noble persons, and increase the importance of your very magnificent office.

"Done in Seville, April 2, 1502.

"The High-Admiral of the Ocean-Sea and Viceroy and Governor-General of the islands and mainland of Asia and the Indies, belonging to the King and Queen, my Lords, and the Captain-General of the Sea, and a Member of their Council.

S:
S.A.S:
XMY
Xpo FERENS."

Columbus was anxious to touch at Española on his voyage to the West; but he was expressly forbidden to do so, as it was known that his presence there could not make for anything but confusion; he was to be permitted, however, to touch there on his return journey. The Great Khan was not out of his mind yet; much in it apparently, for he took an Arabian interpreter with him so that he could converse with that monarch. In fact he did not hesitate to announce that very big results indeed were to come of this voyage of his; among other things he expected to circumnavigate the globe, and made no secret of his expectation. In the meantime he was expected to find some pearls in order to pay for the equipment of his fleet; and in consideration of what had happened to the last lot of pearls collected by him,

an agent named Diego de Porras was sent along with him to keep an account of the gold and precious stones which might be discovered. Special instructions were issued to Columbus about the disposal of these commodities. He does not seem to have minded these somewhat humiliating precautions; he had a way of rising above petty indignities and refusing to recognise them which must have been of great assistance to his self-respect in certain troubled moments in his life.

His delays, however, were so many that in March 1502 the Sovereigns were obliged to order him to depart without any more waiting. Thus he who once had to sue for the means with which to go, whose departures were once the occasion of so much state and ceremony, has now to be hustled forth and asked to go away. Still, he does not seem to mind; once more, as of old, his gaze is fixed beyond the horizon and his mind is filled with one idea. They may not think much of him in Spain now, but they will when he comes back; and he can afford to wait.

Completing his preparations without undignified haste he sent off Bartholomew with his four little vessels from Seville to Cadiz, where the Admiral was to join them. He took farewell of his son Diego and of his brother James; good, friendly James, who had done his best in a difficult position, but had seen quite enough of the wild life of the seas and was now settled in Seville studying hard for the Church. It had always been his ambition, poor James; and, studying hard in Seville, he did in time duly enter the sacred pale and become a priest—by which we may see that if our ambitions are only modest enough we may in time encompass them. I think that sometimes, enveloped in priestly vestments, nodding in the sanctuary, lulled by the pattering murmur of the psalms or dozing through the *Miserere*, James may have thought himself back amid the brilliant sunshine and strange perfumes of Española; and from a dream of some nymph hiding in the sweet groves of the Vega may have awakened with a sigh to the strident voices of his brother priests. At any rate, farewell to James, safely seated beneath the Gospel light, and continuing to sit there until, in the year 1515, death interrupts him. We are not any more concerned with James in his priestly shelter, but with those elder brothers of his who are making ready again to face the sun and the surges.

Columbus's ships were on the point of sailing when word came that the Moors were besieging a Portuguese post on the

coast of Morocco; and, as civility was now the order of the day between Spain and Portugal, the Admiral was instructed to call on his way there and afford some relief. This he did, sailing from Cadiz on the 9th or 10th of May to Ercilla on the Morocco coast, where he anchored on the 13th. But the Moors had all departed and the siege was over; so Columbus, having sent Bartholomew and some of his officers ashore on a civil visit, which was duly returned, set out the same day on his last voyage.

CHAPTER III

THE LAST VOYAGE

THE four ships that made up the Admiral's fleet on his fourth and last voyage were all small caravels, the largest only of seventy tons and the smallest only of fifty. Columbus chose for his flagship the *Capitana*, seventy tons, appointing Diego Tristan to be his captain. The next best ship was the *Santiago de Palos*, under the command of Francisco Porras; Porras and his brother Diego having been more or less foisted on to Columbus by Morales, the Royal Treasurer, who wished to find berths for these two brothers-in-law of his. We shall hear more of the Porras brothers. The third ship was the *Gallega*, sixty tons, a very bad sailer indeed, and on that account entrusted to Bartholomew Columbus, whose skill in navigation, it was hoped, might make up for her bad sailing qualities. Bartholomew had, to tell the truth, had quite enough of the New World, but he was too loyal to Christopher to let him go alone, knowing as he did his precarious state of health and his tendency to despondency. The captain of the *Gallega* was Pedro de Terreros, who had sailed with the Admiral as steward on all his other voyages and was now promoted to a command. The fourth ship was called the *Vizcaina*, fifty tons, and was commanded by Bartolomé Fieschi, a friend of Columbus from Genoa, and a very sound, honourable man. There were altogether 143 souls on board the four caravels.

The fleet as usual made the Canary Islands, where they arrived on the 20th of May, and stopped for five days taking in wood and water and fresh provisions. Columbus was himself again—always more himself at sea than anywhere else; he was following a now familiar road that had no difficulties or dangers for him; and there is no record of the voyage out except that it was quick and prosperous, with the trade-wind blowing so steadily that from the time they left the Canaries until they made land twenty days later they had hardly to touch a sheet or a halliard. The first land they made was the island of Martinique, where wood and water were taken in and the men sent

ashore to wash their linen. To young Ferdinand, but fourteen years old, this voyage was like a fairy tale come true; and his delight in everything that he saw must have added greatly to Christopher's pleasure and interest in the voyage. They only stayed a few days at Martinique, and then sailed westward along the chain of islands until they came to Porto Rico, where they put in to the sunny harbour which they had discovered on a former voyage.

It was at this point that Columbus determined, contrary to his precise orders, to stand across to Española. The place attracted him like a magnet; he could not keep away from it; and although he had a good enough excuse for touching there, it is probable that his real reason was a very natural curiosity to see how things were faring with his old enemy Bobadilla. The excuse was that the *Gallega*, Bartholomew's ship, was so unseaworthy as to be a drag on the progress of the rest of the fleet and a danger to her own crew. In the slightest sea-way she rolled almost gunwale under, and would not carry her sail; and Columbus's plan was to exchange her for a vessel out of the great fleet which he knew had by this time reached Española and discharged its passengers.

He arrived off the harbour of San Domingo on the 29th of June in very threatening weather, and immediately sent Pedro de Terreros ashore with a message to Ovando, asking to be allowed to purchase or exchange one of the vessels that were riding in the harbour, and also leave to shelter his own vessels there during the hurricane which he believed to be approaching. A message came back that he was neither permitted to buy a ship nor to enter the harbour; warning him off from San Domingo, in fact.

With this unfavourable message Terreros also brought back the news of the island. Ovando had been in San Domingo since the 15th of April, and had found the island in a shocking state, the Spanish population having to a man devoted itself to idleness, profligacy, and slave-driving. The only thing that had prospered was the gold-mining; for owing to the licence that Bobadilla had given to the Spaniards to employ native labour to an unlimited extent there had been an immense amount of gold taken from the mines. But in no other respect had island affairs prospered; and Ovando immediately began the usual investigation. The fickle Spaniards, always unfaithful to whomever

was in authority over them, were by this time tired of Bobadilla, in spite of his leniency, and they hailed the coming of Ovando and his numerous equipment with enthusiasm. Bobadilla had also by this time, we may suppose, had enough of the joys of office; at any rate he showed no resentment at the coming of the new Governor, and handed over the island with due ceremony. The result of the investigation of Ovando, however, was to discover a state of things requiring exemplary treatment; friend Roldan was arrested, with several of his allies, and put on board one of the ships to be sent back to Spain for trial. The *cacique* Guarionex, who had been languishing in San Domingo in chains for a long time, was also embarked on one of the returning ships; and about eighteen hundredweights of gold which had been collected were also stowed into cases and embarked. Among this gold there was a nugget weighing 35 lbs. which had been found by a native woman in a river, and which Ovando was sending home as a personal offering to his Sovereigns; and some further 40 lbs. of gold belonging to Columbus, which Carvajal had recovered and placed in a caravel to be taken to Spain for the Admiral. The ships were all ready to sail, and were anchored off the mouth of the river when Columbus arrived in San Domingo.

When he found that he was not to be allowed to enter the harbour himself Columbus sent a message to Ovando warning him that a hurricane was coming on, and begging him to take measures for the safety of his own large fleet. This, however, was not done, and Columbus put to sea that evening. He had only got so far as the eastern end of Española when the hurricane duly came down in the manner of West Indian hurricanes, a solid wall of wind and an advancing wave of the sea which submerged everything in its path. Columbus's little fleet, finding shelter denied them, had moved a little way along the coast, the Admiral standing close in-shore, the others working to the south for sea-room; and although they survived the hurricane they were scattered, and only met several days later, in an extremely battered condition, at the westerly end of the island. But the large home-going fleet had not survived. The hurricane, which was probably from the north-east, struck them just as they lost the lee of the island, and many of them, including the ships with the treasure of gold and the caravels bearing Roldan, Bobadilla, and Guarionex, all went down at once and were never seen or heard of again. Other ships survived for a little while only to founder in the end; a few, much shattered, crept back

to the shelter of San Domingo; but only one, it is said, survived the hurricane so well as to be able to proceed to Spain; and that was the one which carried Carvajal and Columbus's little property of gold. The Admiral's luck again; or, as he would have put it, the intervention of the Holy Trinity.

After the shattering experience of the storm, Columbus, although he did not return to San Domingo, remained for some time on the coast of Española repairing his ships and resting his exhausted crews. There were threatenings of another storm which delayed them still further, and it was not until the middle of July that the Admiral was able to depart on the real purpose of his voyage. His object was to strike the mainland far to the westward of the Gulf of Paria, and so by following it back eastward to find the passage which he believed to exist. But the winds and currents were very baffling; he was four days out of sight of land after touching at an island north of Jamaica; and finally, in some bewilderment, he altered his course more and more northerly until he found his whereabouts by coming in sight of the archipelago off the south-western end of Cuba which he had called the Gardens. From here he took a departure south-west, and on the 30th of July came in sight of a small island off the northern coast of Honduras which he called Isla de Pinos, and from which he could see the hills of the mainland. At this island he found a canoe of immense size with a sort of house or caboose built amidships, in which was established a *cacique* with his family and dependents; and the people in the canoe showed signs of more advanced civilisation than any seen by Columbus before in these waters. They wore clothing, they had copper hatchets, and bells, and palm-wood swords in the edges of which were set sharp blades of flint. They had a fermented liquor, a kind of maize beer, which looked like English ale; they had some kind of money or medium of exchange also, and they told the Admiral that there was land to the west where all these things existed and many more. It is strange and almost inexplicable that he did not follow this trail to the westward; if he had done so he would have discovered Mexico. But one thing at a time always occupied him to the exclusion of everything else; his thoughts were now turned to the eastward, where he supposed the straits were; and the significance of this canoe full of natives was lost upon him.

They crossed over to the mainland of Honduras on August 15, Bartholomew landing and assisting at Mass on the beach as the Admiral himself was too ill to go ashore. Three days later

the cross and banner of Castile were duly erected on the shores of the Rio Tinto and the country was formally annexed. The natives were friendly, and supplied the ships with provisions; but they were very black and ugly, and Columbus readily believed the assertion of his native guide that they were cannibals. They continued their course to the eastward, but as the gulf narrowed the force of the west-going current was felt more severely. Columbus, believing that the strait which he sought lay to the eastward, laboured against the current, and his difficulties were increased by the bad weather which he now encountered. There were squalls and hurricanes, tempests and cross-currents that knocked his frail ships about and almost swamped them. Anchors and gear were lost, the sails were torn out of the bolt-ropes, timbers were strained; and for six weeks this state of affairs went on, to an accompaniment of thunder and lightning which added to the terror and discomfort of the mariners.

This was in August and the first half of September—six weeks of the worst weather that Columbus had ever experienced. It was the more unfortunate that his illness made it impossible for him to get actively about the ship; and he had to have a small cabin or tent rigged up on deck, in which he could lie and direct the navigation. It is bad enough to be as ill as he was in a comfortable bed ashore; it is a thousand times worse amid the discomforts of a small boat at sea; but what must it have been thus to have one's sick-bed on the deck of a cockle-shell which was being buffeted and smashed in unknown seas, and to have to think and act not for oneself alone but for the whole of a suffering little fleet! No wonder the Admiral's distress of mind was great; but oddly enough his anxieties, as he recorded them in a letter, were not so much on his own account as on behalf of others. The terrified seamen making vows to the Virgin and promises of pilgrimages between their mad rushes to the sheets and furious clinging and hauling; his son Ferdinand, who was only fourteen, but who had to endure the same pain and fatigue as the rest of them, and who was enduring it with such pluck that "it was as if he had been at sea eighty years"; the dangers of Bartholomew, who had not wanted to come on this voyage at all, but was now in the thick of it in the worst ship of the squadron, and fighting for his life amid tempests and treacherous seas; Diego at home, likely to be left an orphan and at the mercy of fickle and doubtful friends—these were the chief causes of the Admiral's anxiety.

All he said about himself was that "by my misfortune the twenty years of service which I gave with so much fatigue and danger have profited me so little that to-day I have in Castile no roof, and if I wished to dine or sup or sleep I have only the tavern for my last refuge, and for that, most of the time, I would be unable to pay the score." Not cheerful reflections, these, to add to the pangs of acute gout and the consuming anxieties of seamanship under such circumstances. Dreadful to him, these things, but not dreadful to us; for they show us an Admiral restored to his true temper and vocation, something of the old sea hero breaking out in him at last through all these misfortunes, like the sun through the stormy clouds of an autumn afternoon.

Forty days of passage through this wilderness of water were endured before the sea-worn mariners, rounding a cape on September 12, saw stretching before them to the southward a long coast of plain and mountain which they were able to follow with a fair wind. Gradually the sea went down; the current which had opposed them here aided them, and they were able to recover a little from the terrible strain of the last six weeks. The cape was called by Columbus Gracios de Dios; and on the 16th of September they landed at the entrance to a river to take in water. The boat which was sent ashore, however, capsized on the sandy bar of the entrance, two men being drowned, and the river was given the name of Rio de Desastre. They found a better anchorage, where they rested for ten days, overhauled their stores, and had some intercourse with the natives and exploration on shore. Some incidents occurred which can best be described in the Admiral's own language as he recorded them in his letter to the Sovereigns.

". . . When I reached there, they immediately sent me two young girls dressed in rich garments. The older one might not have been more than eleven years of age and the other seven; both with so much experience, so much manner, and so much appearance as would have been sufficient if they had been public women for twenty years. They bore with them magic powder and other things belonging to their art. When they arrived I gave orders that they should be adorned with our things and sent them immediately ashore. There I saw a tomb within the mountain as large as a house and finely worked with great artifice, and a corpse stood thereon uncovered, and, looking within it, it seemed as if he stood upright. Of the other arts they told me that there was excellence. Great and little animals are there in quantities, and very different

from ours ; among which I saw boars of frightful form so that a dog of the Irish breed dared not face them. With a cross-bow I had wounded an animal which exactly resembles a baboon only that it was much larger and has a face like a human being. I had pierced it with an arrow from one side to the other, entering in the breast and going out near the tail, and because it was very ferocious I cut off one of the fore feet which rather seemed to be a hand, and one of the hind feet. The boars seeing this commenced to set up their bristles and fled with great fear, seeing the blood of the other animal. When I saw this I caused to be thrown them the 'uegare,'[1] certain animals they call so, where it stood, and approaching him, near as he was to death, and the arrow still sticking in his body, he wound his tail around his snout and held it fast, and with the other hand which remained free, seized him by the neck as an enemy. This act, so magnificent and novel, together with the fine country and hunting of wild beasts, made me write this to your Majesties."

The natives at this anchorage of Cariari were rather suspicious, but Columbus seized two of them to act as guides in his journey farther down the coast. Weighing anchor on October 5 he worked along the Costa Rica shore, which here turns to the eastward again, and soon found a tribe of natives who wore large ornaments of gold. They were reluctant to part with the gold, but as usual pointed down the coast and said that there was much more gold there ; they even gave a name to the place where the gold could be found—Veragua ; and for once this country was found to have a real existence. The fleet anchored there on October 17, being greeted by defiant blasts of conch shells and splashing of water from the indignant natives. Business was done, however : seventeen gold discs in exchange for three hawks' bells.

Still Columbus went on in pursuit of his geographical chimera ; even gold had no power to detain him from the earnest search for this imaginary strait. Here and there along the coast he saw increasing signs of civilisation—once a wall built of mud and stone, which made him think of Cathay again. He now got it into his head that the region he was in was ten days' journey from the Ganges, and that it was surrounded by water ; which if it means anything means that he thought he was on a large island ten days' sail to the eastward of the coast of India. He was altogether at sea as to the facts, but his heart and purpose were still steadfast.

They sailed a little farther along the coast, now between narrow islands that were like the streets of Genoa, where the boughs of trees on either hand brushed the shrouds of the ships ;

[1] Peccary.

now past harbours where there were native fairs and markets, and where natives were to be seen mounted on horses and armed with swords; now by long, lonely stretches of the coast where there was nothing to be seen but the low, green shore with the mountains behind and the alligators basking at the river mouths. At last (November 2) they arrived at the cape known as Nombre de Dios, which Ojeda had reached some time before in his voyage to the West.

The coast of the mainland had thus been explored from the Bay of Honduras to Brazil, and Columbus was obliged to admit that there was no strait. Having satisfied himself of that he decided to turn back to Veragua, where he had seen the natives smelting gold, in order to make some arrangement for establishing a colony there. The wind, however, which had headed him almost all the way on his easterly voyage, headed him again now and began to blow steadily from the west. He started on his return journey on the 5th of December, and immediately fell into almost worse troubles than he had been in before. The wood of the ships had been bored through and through by sea-worms, so that they leaked very badly; the crews were sick, provisions were spoilt, biscuits rotten. Young Ferdinand Columbus, if he did not actually make notes of this voyage at the time, preserved a very lively recollection of it; and it is to his "Historie," which in its earlier passages is of doubtful authenticity, that we owe some of the most human touches of description relating to this voyage. Any passage in his work relating to food or animals at this time has the true ring of boyish interest and observation, and is in sharp contrast to the second-hand and artificial tone of the earlier chapters of his book. About the incident of the howling monkey, which the Admiral's Irish hound would not face, Ferdinand remarks that it "frighted a good dog that we had, but frighted one of our wild boars a great deal more"; and as to the condition of the biscuits when they turned westward again, he says that they were "so full of weevils that, as God shall help me, I saw many that stayed till night to eat their sop for fear of seeing them."

After experiencing some terrible weather, in the course of which they had been obliged to catch sharks for food and had once been nearly overwhelmed by a waterspout, they entered a harbour where, in the words of young Ferdinand, "we saw the people living like birds in the tops of the trees, laying sticks across from bough to bough and building their huts upon them; and though we knew not the reason of the custom we guessed

that it was done for fear of their enemies, or of the griffins that are in this island." After further experiences of bad weather they made what looked like a suitable harbour on the coast of Veragua, which harbour, as they entered it on the day of the Epiphany (January 9, 1503), they named Belem or Bethlehem. The river in the mouth of which they were anchored, however, was subject to sudden spouts and gushes of water from the hills, one of which occurred on January 24 and nearly swamped the caravels. This spout of water was caused by the rainy season, which had begun in the mountains and presently came down to the coast, where it rained continuously until the 14th of February. They had made friends with the Quibian, or chief of the country, and he had offered to conduct them to the place where the gold mines were; so Bartholomew was sent off in the rain with a boat party to find this territory. It turned out afterwards that the cunning Quibian had taken them out of his own country and showed them the gold mines of a neighbouring chief, which were not so rich as his own.

Columbus, left idle in the absence of Bartholomew, listening to the continuous drip and patter of the rain on the leaves and the water, begins to dream again—to dream of gold and geography. Remembers that David left three thousand quintals of gold from the Indies to Solomon for the decoration of the Temple; remembers that Josephus said it came from the Golden Chersonesus; decides that enough gold could never have been got from the mines of Hayna in Española; and concludes that the Ophir of Solomon must be here in Veragua and not there in Española. It was always here and now with Columbus; and as he moved on his weary sea pilgrimages these mythical lands with their glittering promise moved about with him, like a pillar of fire leading him through the dark night of his quest.

The rain came to an end, however, the sun shone out again, and activity took the place of dreams with Columbus and with his crew. He decided to found a settlement in this place, and to make preparations for seizing and working the gold mines. It was decided to leave a garrison of eighty men, and the business of unloading the necessary arms and provisions and building houses ashore was immediately begun. Hawks' bells and other trifles were widely distributed among the natives, with special toys and delicacies for the Quibian, in order that friendly

relations might be established from the beginning; and special regulations were framed to prevent the possibility of any recurrence of the disasters that overtook the settlers of Isabella.

Such are the orderly plans of Columbus; but the Quibian has his plans too, which are found to be of quite a different nature. The Quibian does not like intruders, though he likes their hawks' bells well enough; he is not quite so innocent as poor Guacanagari and the rest of them were; he knows that gold is a thing coveted by people to whom it does not belong, and that trouble follows in its train. Quibian therefore decides that Columbus and his followers shall be exterminated—news of which intention fortunately came to the ears of Columbus in time, Diego Mendez and Rodrigo de Escobar having boldly advanced into the Quibian's village and seen the warlike preparations. Bartholomew, returning from his visit to the gold mines, was informed of this state of affairs. Always quick to strike, Bartholomew immediately started with an armed force, and advanced upon the village so rapidly that the savages were taken by surprise, their headquarters surrounded, and the Quibian and fifty of his warriors captured. Bartholomew triumphantly marched the prisoners back, the Quibian being entrusted to the charge of Juan Sanchez, who was rowing him in a little boat. The Quibian complained that his bonds were hurting him, and foolish Sanchez eased them a little; Quibian, with a quick movement, wriggled overboard and dived to the bottom; came up again somewhere and reached home alive. No one saw him come up, however, and they thought he had been drowned.

Columbus now made ready to depart, and the caravels having been got over the shallow bar, their loading was completed and they were ready to sail. On April 6 Diego Tristan was sent in charge of a boat with a message to Bartholomew, who was to be left in command of the settlement; but when Tristan had rounded the point at the entrance to the river and come in sight of the shore he had an unpleasant surprise; the settlement was being savagely attacked by the resurrected Quibian and his followers. The fight had lasted for three hours, and had been going badly against the Spaniards, when Bartholomew and Diego Mendez rallied a little force round them and, calling to Columbus's Irish dog which had been left with them, made a rush upon the savages and so terrified them that they scattered. Bartholomew with eight of the other Spaniards was wounded, and one was killed.

It was at this point that Tristan's boat arrived at the settlement. Having seen the fight safely over, he went on up the river to get water, although he was warned that it was not safe; and at a point a little farther up the river, beyond some low, green arm of the shore, he met with a sudden and bloody death. A cloud of yelling savages surrounded his boat, hurling javelins and arrows; and only one seaman, who managed to dive into the water and crawl ashore, escaped to bring the evil tidings.

The Spaniards under Bartholomew's command broke into a panic, and taking advantage of his wounded condition they tried to make sail on their caravel and join the ships of Columbus outside; but since the time of the rains the river had so much gone down that she was stuck fast in the sand. They could not even get a boat over the bar, for there was a heavy cross sea breaking on it; and in the meantime here they were, trapped inside this river, the air resounding with dismal blasts of the natives' conch shells, and the natives themselves dancing round and threatening to rush their position; while the bodies of Tristan and his little crew were to be seen floating down the stream, feasted upon by a screaming cloud of birds. The position of the shore party was desperate; and it was only by the greatest efforts that the wounded Bartholomew managed to rally his crew and get them to remove their little camp to an open place on the shore, where a kind of stockade was made of chests, casks, spars, and the caravel's boat. With this for cover, the Spanish firearms, so long as there was ammunition for them, were enough to keep the natives at bay.

Outside the bar, in his anchorage beyond the green, wooded point, the Admiral meanwhile was having an anxious time. One supposes the entrance to the river to have been complicated by shoals and patches of broken water extending some considerable distance, so that the Admiral's anchorage would be ten or twelve miles away from the camp ashore, and of course entirely hidden from it. As day after day passed and Diego Tristan did not return, the Admiral's anxiety increased. Among the three caravels that now formed his little squadron there was only one boat remaining, the others, not counting one taken by Tristan and one left with Bartholomew, having all been smashed in the late hurricanes. In the heavy sea that was running on the bar the Admiral dared not risk his last re-

maining boat; but in the meantime he was cut off from all news of the shore party and deprived of any means of finding out what had happened to Tristan. And presently to these anxieties was added a further disaster. It will be remembered that when the Quibian had been captured fifty natives had been taken with him; and these were confined in the forecastle of the *Capitana* and covered by a large hatch, on which most of the crew slept at night. But one night the natives collected a heap of big stones from the ballast of the ship, and piled them up to a kind of platform beneath the hatch; some of the strongest of them got upon the platform and set their backs horizontally against the hatch, gave a great heave and lifted it off. In the confusion that followed, a great many of the prisoners escaped into the sea, and swam ashore; the rest were captured and thrust back under the hatch, which was chained down; but when on the following morning the Spaniards went to attend to this remnant it was found that they had all hanged themselves.

This was a great disaster, since it increased the danger of the garrison ashore, and destroyed all hope of friendship with the natives. There was something terrible and powerful, too, in the spirit of people who could thus to a man make up their minds either to escape or die; and the Admiral must have felt that he was in the presence of strange, powerful elements that were far beyond his control. At any moment, moreover, the wind might change and put him on a lee shore, or force him to seek safety in sea-room; in which case the position of Bartholomew would be a very critical one. It was while things were at this apparent deadlock that a brave fellow, Pedro Ledesma, offered to attempt to swim through the surf if the boat would take him to the edge of it. Brave Pedro, his offer accepted, makes the attempt; plunges into the boiling surf, and with mighty efforts succeeds in reaching the shore; and after an interval is seen by his comrades, who are waiting with their boat swinging on the edge of the surf, to be returning to them; plunges into the sea, comes safely through the surf again, and is safely hauled on board, having accomplished a very real and satisfactory bit of service.

The story he had to tell the Admiral was as we know not a pleasant one—Tristan and his men dead, several of Bartholomew's force, including the Adelantado himself, wounded, and all in a state of panic and fear at the hostile natives. The Spaniards would do nothing to make the little fortress safer,

and were bent only on escaping from the place of horror. Some of them were preparing canoes in which to come out to the ships when the sea should go down, as their one small boat was insufficient; and they swore that if the Admiral would not take them they would seize their own caravel and sail out themselves into the unknown sea as soon as they could get her floated over the bar, rather than remain in such a dreadful situation. Columbus was in a very bad way. He could not desert Bartholomew, as that would expose him to the treachery of his own men and the hostility of the savages. He could not reinforce him, except by remaining himself with the whole of his company; and in that case there would be no means of sending the news of his rich discovery to Spain. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to break up the settlement and return some other time with a stronger force sufficient to occupy the country. And even this course had its difficulties; for the weather continued bad, the wind was blowing on to the shore, the sea was so rough as to make the passage of the bar impossible, and any change for the worse in the weather would probably drive his own crazy ships ashore and cut off all hope of escape.

The Admiral, whose health was now permanently broken, and who only had respite from his sufferings in fine weather and when he was relieved from a burden of anxieties such as had been continually pressing on him now for three months, fell into his old state of sleeplessness, feverishness, and consequent depression; and in these circumstances it is not wonderful that the firm ground of fact began to give a little beneath him and his stout heart to break a little. Of this hour of agony he himself wrote an account to the King and Queen, so we may as well have it in his own words.

"I mounted to the top of the ship crying out with a weak voice, weeping bitterly, to the commanders of your Majesties' army, and calling again to the four winds to help; but they did not answer me. Tired out, I fell asleep and sighing I heard a voice very full of pity which spoke these words: *O fool! and slow to believe and to serve Him, thy God and the God of all. What did He more for Moses? and for David His servant? Since thou wast born He had always so great care for thee. When He saw thee in an age with which He was content He made thy name sound marvellously through the world. The Indies, which are so rich a part of the world, He has given to thee as thine. Thou hast distributed them wherever it has pleased thee; He gave thee power so to do. Of the bonds of the ocean which were locked with so strong chains He gave thee the keys, and thou wast obeyed in all the land, and among the Christians thou hast acquired a good and honourable reputation. What did He more for the people of Israel when He brought them out of Egypt? or yet for David,*

whom from being a shepherd He made King of Judea? Turn to Him and recognise thine error, for His mercy is infinite. Thine old age will be no hindrance to all great things. Many very great inheritances are in His power. Abraham was more than one hundred years old when he begat Isaac and also Sarah was not young. Thou art calling for uncertain aid. Answer me, who has afflicted thee so much and so many times—God or the world? The privileges and promises which God makes He never breaks to anyone; nor does He say after having received the service that His intention was not so and it is to be understood in another manner: nor imposes martyrdom to give proof of His power. He abides by the letter of His word. All that He promises He abundantly accomplishes. This is His way. I have told thee what the Creator hath done for thee and does for all. Now He shows me the reward and payment of thy suffering and which thou hast passed in the service of others. And thus half dead, I heard everything; but I could never find an answer to make to words so certain, and only I wept for my errors. He, whoever he might be, finished speaking, saying: *Trust and fear not, for thy tribulations are written in marble and not without reason.*"[1]

Strange mingling of mortal weakness and immortal faith! Not much to be deciphered from it, nor any profitable comment to be made on it, by the light of cold reason; but surely to be deciphered, even dimly, by such other and warmer lights as may still flicker within us, and to be commented on, if at all, by each one silently in his own heart.

CHAPTER IV

HEROIC ADVENTURES BY LAND AND SEA

NO man's faith was ever more justified than the Admiral's; no sooner had he got done with his Vision than the wind dropped, the sun came out, the sea fell, and communication with the land was restored. While he had been sick and dreaming one of his crew, Diego Mendez, had been busy with practical efforts in preparation for this day of fine weather; he had made a great raft out of Indian canoes lashed together, with mighty sacks of sailcloth into which the provisions might be bundled; and as soon as the sea had become calm enough he took this raft in over the bar to the settlement ashore, and began the business of embarking the whole of the stores and ammunition of Bartholomew's garrison. By this practical method the whole establishment was transferred from the shore to the ships in the space of two days, and nothing was left but the caravel, which it was found impossible to float again. It was heavy work towing the raft constantly backwards and forwards from the ships to the shore; but Diego Mendez had the satisfaction of being the last man to embark from the deserted settlement, and to see that not an ounce of stores or ammunition had been lost. Columbus, always quick to reward the services of a good man, kissed Diego Mendez publicly on both cheeks, and (what doubtless pleased him much better) gave him command of the caravel of which murdered Tristan had been the captain.

With a favourable wind they sailed from this accursed shore at the end of April 1503. It is strange, as Winsor points out, that in the name of this coast should be preserved the only territorial remembrance of Columbus, and that his descendant the Duke of Veragua should in his title commemorate one of the most unfortunate of the Admiral's adventures. And if any one should desire a proof of the utterly misleading nature of most of Columbus's writings about himself, let him know that a few months later he solemnly wrote to the Sovereigns concerning this very place that "there is not in the world a country whose inhabitants are more timid; and the whole place is capable of

being easily put into a state of defence. Your people that may come here, if they should wish to become masters of the products of other lands, will have to take them by force or retire empty-handed. In this country they will simply have to trust their persons in the hands of the savages." The facts being that the inhabitants were extremely fierce and warlike and irreconcilably hostile; that the river was a trap out of which in the dry season there was no escape, and the harbour outside a mere shelterless lee shore; that it would require an army and an armada to hold the place against the natives, and that any one who trusted himself in their hands would share the fate of the unhappy Diego Tristan. One may choose between believing that the Admiral's memory had entirely failed him (although he had not been backward in making a minute record of all his sufferings) or that he was craftily attempting to deceive the Sovereigns. My own belief is that he was neither trying to deceive anybody nor that he had forgotten anything, but that he was almost incapable of uttering the bare truth when he had a pen in his hand.

From their position on the coast of Veragua Española bore almost due north; but Columbus was too good a seaman to attempt to make the island by sailing straight for it. He knew that the steady west-going current would set him far down on his course, and he therefore decided to work up the coast a long way to the eastward before standing across for Española. The crew grumbled very much at this proceeding, which they did not understand; in fact they argued from it that the Admiral was making straight for Spain, and this, in the crazy condition of the vessels, naturally alarmed them. But in his old high-handed, secret way the Admiral told them nothing; he even took away from the other captains all the charts that they had made of this coast, so that no one but himself would be able to find the way back to it; and he took a kind of pleasure in the complete mystification thus produced on his fellow-voyagers. "None of them could explain whither I went nor whence I came; they did not know the way to return thither," he writes, somewhat childishly.

But he was not back in Española yet, and his means for getting there were crumbling away beneath his feet. One of the three remaining caravels was entirely riddled by sea-worms and had to be abandoned at the harbour called Puerto Bello;

and the company was crowded on to two ships. The men now became more than ever discontented at the easterly course, and on May 1, when he had come as far east as the Gulf of Darien, Columbus felt obliged to bear away to the north, although as it turned out he had not nearly made enough easting. He stood on this course for nine days, the west-going current setting him down all the time; and the first land that he made, on May 10, was the group of islands off the western end of Cuba which he had called the Queen's Gardens.

He anchored for six days here, as the crews were completely exhausted; the ships' stores were reduced to biscuits, oil, and vinegar; the vessels leaked like sieves, and the pumps had to be kept going continually. And no sooner had they anchored than a hurricane came on, and brought up a sea so heavy that the Admiral was convinced that his ships could not live within it. We have got so accustomed to reading of storms and tempests that it seems useless to try and drive home the horror and terror of them; but here were these two rotten ships alone at the end of the world, far beyond the help of man, the great seas roaring up under them in the black night, parting their worn cables, snatching away their anchors from them, and finally driving them one upon the other to grind and strain and prey upon each other, as though the external conspiracy of the elements against them both were not sufficient! One writes or reads the words, but what does it mean to us? and can we by any conceivable effort of imagination realise what it meant to this group of human beings who lived through that night so many hundred years ago—men like ourselves with hearts to sink and faint, capable of fear and hunger, capable of misery, pain, and endurance? Bruised and battered, wet by the terrifying surges, and entirely uncomforted by food or drink, they did somehow endure these miseries; and were to endure worse too before they were done with it.

Their six days' sojourn amid the Queen's Gardens, then, was not a great success; and as soon as they were able they set sail again, standing eastward when the wind permitted them. But wind and current were against them, and all through the month of May and the early part of June they struggled along the south coast of Cuba, their ships as full of holes as a honeycomb, pumps going incessantly, and in addition the worn-out seamen doing heroic labour at baling with buckets and kettles. Lee helm! Down go the buckets and kettles and out run the wretched scarecrows of seamen to the weary business of tacking

ship, letting go, brailing up, hauling in, and making fast for the thousandth time; and then back to the pumps and kettles again. No human being could endure this for an indefinite time; and though their diet of worms represented by the rotten biscuit was varied with cassava bread supplied by friendly natives, the Admiral could not make his way eastward farther than Cape Cruz. Round that cape his leaking, strained vessels could not be made to look against the wind and the tide; could hardly indeed be made to float or swim upon the water at all; and the Admiral had now to consider, not whether he could sail on a particular point of the compass, but whether he could by any means avoid another course which the fates now proposed to him—namely, a perpendicular course to the bottom of the sea.

It was a race between the water and the ships, and the only thing the Admiral could think of was to turn southward across to Jamaica, which he did on June 23, putting into Puerto Bueno, now called Dry Harbour. But there was no food there, and as his ships were settling deeper and deeper in the water he had to make sail again and drive eastwards as far as Puerto Santa Gloria, now called Don Christopher's Cove. He was just in time. The ships were run ashore side by side on a sandy beach, the pumps were abandoned, and in one tide the ships were full of water. The remaining anchor cables were used to lash the two ships together so that they would not move; although there was little fear of that, seeing the weight of water that was in them. Everything that could be saved was brought up on deck, and a kind of cabin or platform which could be fortified was rigged on the highest part of the ships. And so no doubt for some days, although their food was almost finished, the wretched and exhausted voyagers could stretch their cramped limbs, and rest in the warm sun, and listen, from their safe haven on the firm sands, to the hated voice of the sea.

Thanks to careful regulations made by the Admiral, governing the intercourse between the Spaniards and the natives ashore, friendly relations were soon established, and the crews were supplied with cassava bread and fruit in abundance. Two officials superintended every purchase of provisions to avoid the possibility of any dispute, for in the event of even a momentary hostility the thatched-roof structures on the ships could easily have been set on fire, and the position of the

Spaniards, without shelter amid a hostile population, would have been a desperate one. This disaster, however, was avoided; but the Admiral soon began to be anxious about the supply of provisions from the immediate neighbourhood, which after the first few days began to be irregular. There were a large number of Spaniards to be fed, the natives never kept any great store of provisions for themselves, and the Spaniards were entirely at their mercy for provisions from day to day.

Diego Mendez, always ready for active and practical service, now offered to take three men and make a journey through the island to arrange for the purchase of provisions from different villages, so that the men on the ships would not be dependent upon any one source. This offer was gratefully accepted; and Mendez, with his lieutenants well supplied with toys and trinkets, started eastward along the north coast of Jamaica. He made no mistakes; he was quick and clever at ingratiating himself with the *caciques*, and he succeeded in arranging with three separate potentates to send regular supplies of provisions to the men on the ships. At each place where he made this arrangement he detached one of his assistants and sent him back with the first load of provisions, so that the regular line of carriage might be the more quickly established; and when they had all gone he borrowed a couple of natives and pushed on by himself until he reached the eastern end of the island. He made friends here with a powerful *cacique* named Amerro, from whom he bought a large canoe, and paid for it with some of the clothing off his back. With the canoe were furnished six Indians to row it, and Mendez made a triumphant journey back by sea, touching at the places where his depots had been established and seeing that his commissariat arrangements were working properly. He was warmly received on his return to the ships, and the result of his efforts was soon visible in the daily supplies of food that now regularly arrived.

Thus was one difficulty overcome; but it was not likely that either Columbus himself or any of his people would be content to remain for ever on the beach of Jamaica. It was necessary to establish communication with Española, and thence with Spain; but how to do it in the absence of ships or even boats? Columbus, pondering much upon this matter, one day calls Diego Mendez aside; walks him off, most likely, under the great rustling palm-trees beyond the beach, and there tells him his difficulty. "My son," says he, "you and I understand the difficulties and dangers of our position here better

than any one else. We are few; the Indians are many; we know how fickle and easily irritated they are, and how a firebrand thrown into our thatched cabins would set the whole thing ablaze. It is quite true that you have very cleverly established a provision supply, but it is dependent entirely upon the good nature of the natives and it might cease to-morrow. Here is my plan: you have a good canoe; why should some one not go over to Española in it and send back a ship for us?"

Diego Mendez, knowing very well what is meant, looks down upon the ground. His spoken opinion is that such a journey is not merely difficult but impossible—journey in a frail native canoe across one hundred and fifty miles of open and rough sea; although his private opinion is other than that. No, he cannot imagine such a thing being done; cannot think who would be able to do it.

Long silence from the Admiral; eloquent silence, accompanied by looks no less eloquent.

"Admiral," says Mendez again, "you know very well that I have risked my life for you and the people before and would do it again. But there are others who have at least as good a right to this great honour and peril as I have; let me beg of you, therefore, to summon all the company together, make this proposal to them, and see if any one will undertake it. If not, I will once more risk my life."

The proposal being duly made to the assembled crews, every one, as cunning Mendez had thought, declares it impossible; every one hangs back. Upon which Diego Mendez with a fine gesture comes forward and volunteers; makes his little dramatic effect and has his little ovation. Thoroughly Spanish this, significant of that mixture of vanity and bravery, of swagger and fearlessness, which is characteristic of the best in Spain. It was a desperately brave thing to venture upon, this voyage from Jamaica to Española in a native canoe and across a sea visited by dreadful hurricanes; and the volunteer was entitled to his little piece of heroic drama.

While Mendez was making his preparations, putting a false keel on the canoe and fixing weather boards along its gunwales to prevent its shipping seas, fitting a mast and sail and giving it a coat of tar, the Admiral retired into his cabin and busied himself with his pen. He wrote one letter to Ovando briefly describing his circumstances and requesting that a ship should be sent for his relief; and another to the Sovereigns, in which a long, rambling account was given of the events of

the voyage. Much in it about Solomon and Josephus, of the Abbot Joachim, of Saint Jerome and the Great Khan; more about the Holy Sepulchre and the intentions of the Almighty in that matter; with some serious practical concern for the rich land of Veragua which he had discovered, lest it should share the fate of his other discoveries and be eaten up by idle adventurers. "Veragua," he says, "is not a little son which may be given to a step-mother to nurse. Of Española and Paria and all the other lands I never think without the tears falling from my eyes; I believe that the example of these ought to serve for the others." And then this passage:—

"The good and sound purpose which I always had to serve your Majesties, and the dishonour and unmerited ingratitude, will not suffer the soul to be silent although I wished it, therefore I ask pardon of your Majesties. I have been so lost and undone; until now I have wept for others that your Majesties might have compassion on them; and now may the heavens weep for me and the earth weep for me in temporal affairs; I have not a farthing to make an offering in spiritual affairs. I have remained here on the Indian islands in the manner I have before said in great pain and infirmity, expecting every day death, surrounded by innumerable savages full of cruelty and by our enemies, and so far from the sacraments of the Holy Mother Church that I believe the soul will be forgotten when it leaves the body. Let them weep for me who have charity, truth and justice. I did not undertake this voyage of navigation to gain honour or material things, that is certain, because the hope already was entirely lost; but I did come to serve your Majesties with honest intention and with good charitable zeal, and I do not lie."

Poor old heart, older than its years, thus wailing out its sorrows to ears none too sympathetic; troubled voice, uplifted from the bright shores of that lonely island in the midst of strange seas! It will not come clear to the head alone; the echoes of this cry must reverberate in the heart if they are to reach and animate the understanding.

At this time also the Admiral wrote to his friend Gaspar Gorricio; and the reader may look upon a fascimile of the faded leaf upon which the trivial document still exists. For the benefit of those who may be interested I give the letter in Spanish and English.

"REUERENDO Y MUY DEBOTO PADRE:

"Si my viaje fuera tan apropriado// ala salud de my persona y descanso de my casa como// amuestra que aya de ser acresçentamiento de la corona real// del rey y de la reyna mys señores yo espereria de

bebir mas// de çien gibileos. el tiempo non da lugar que yo escriua mas largo// yo espero que el portador sea persona de my casa que os dira por palabra// mas que non se pueda dezir en myl papelas y tambien suplira don diego.// al padre priol y a todos esos religiosos pido por merçed que se acoerden// de my en todas sus oraçiones. fecha en la ysla de janahica a vii// de julio, 1503.

" Fara lo que VUESTRA REUERENCIA// mandare.//

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Xpo FERENS."//

" REVEREND AND VERY DEVOUT FATHER:

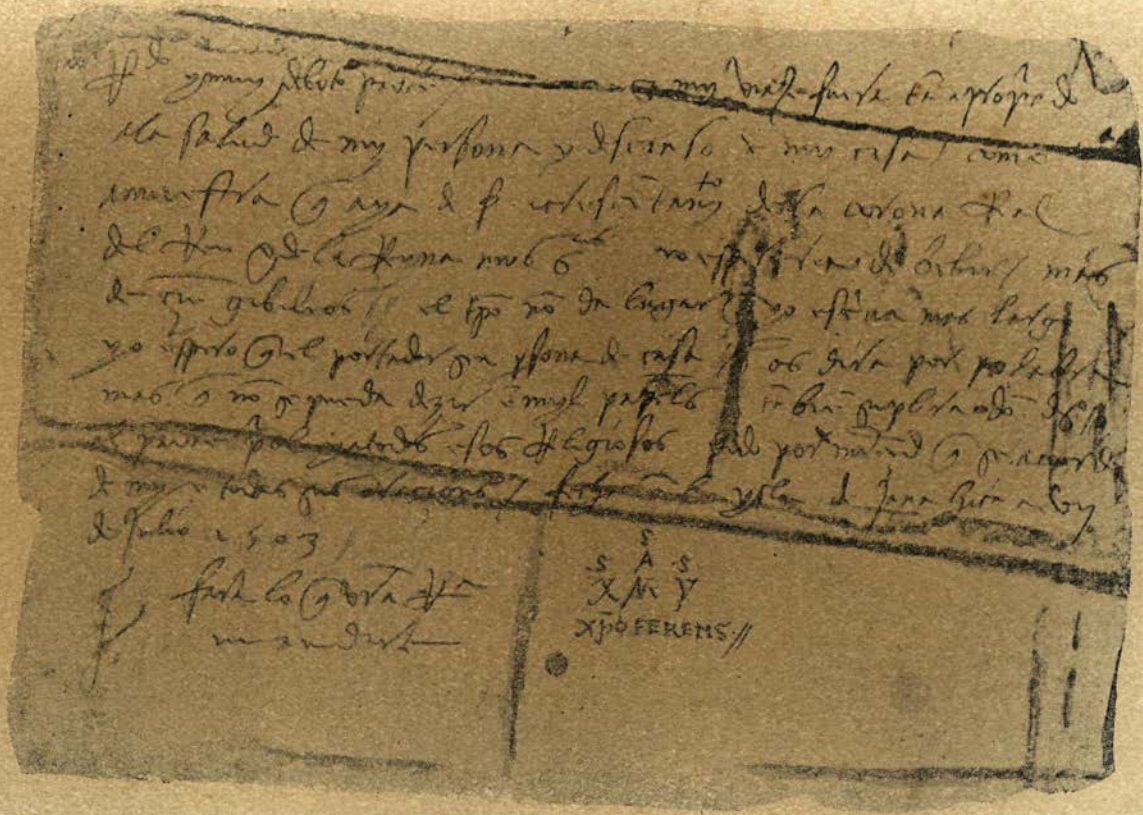
" If my voyage should be as conducive to my personal health and the repose of my house as it seems likely to be conducive to the aggrandisement of the royal Crown of the King and Queen, my Lords, I might hope to live more than a hundred years. I have not time to write more at length. I hope that the bearer of this letter may be a person of my house who will tell you verbally more than can be told in a thousand papers, and also Don Diego will supply information. I beg as a favour of the Father Prior and all the members of your religious house, that they remember me in all their prayers.

" Done on the island of Jamaica, July 7, 1503.

" I am at the command of your Reverence.

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Xpo FERENS."

Diego Mendez found some one among the Spaniards to accompany him, but his heroic name is not recorded. The six Indians were taken to row the canoe. They had to make their way at first against the strong currents along the northern coast of Jamaica, so as to reach its eastern extremity before striking across to Española. At one point they met a flotilla of Indian canoes, which chased them and captured them, but they escaped. When they arrived at the end of the easterly point of Jamaica, now known as Morant Point, they had to wait two or three days for calm weather and a favourable wind to waft them across to Española, and while thus waiting they were suddenly surrounded and captured by a tribe of hostile natives, who carried them off some nine or ten miles into the island, and signified their intention of killing them. But they began to quarrel among themselves as to how they should divide the spoils which they had captured with the canoe, and decided that the only way of settling the dispute was by some elaborate trial of hazard which they used. While they were busy with



FACSIMILE LETTER OF COLUMBUS

July 7th, 1503

their trial Diego Mendez managed to escape, got back to the canoe, and worked his way back in it alone to the harbour where Columbus was encamped. The other Spaniard who was with him probably perished, for there is no record of what became of him—an obscure life lost in a brave enterprise.

One would have thought that Mendez now had enough of canoe voyages, but he had no sooner got back than he offered to set out again, only stipulating that an armed force should march along the coast by land to secure his safety until he could stand across to Española. Bartholomew Columbus immediately put himself at the head of a large and well-armed party for this purpose, and Bartolomeo Fieschi, the Genoese captain of one of the lost caravels, volunteered to accompany Mendez in a second canoe. Each canoe was now manned by six Spanish volunteers and ten Indians to row; Fieschi, as soon as they had reached the coast of Española, was to bring the good news to the Admiral; while Mendez must go on to San Domingo, procure a ship, and himself proceed to Spain with the Admiral's letters. The canoes were provisioned with water, cassava bread, and fish; and they departed on this enterprise some time in August 1503.

Their passage along the coast was protected by Bartholomew Columbus, who marched along with them on the shore. They waited a few days at the end of the island for favourable weather, and finally said farewell to the good Adelantado, who we may be sure stood watching them until they were well out of sight.

There was not a cloud in the sky when the canoes stood out to sea; the water was calm, and reflected the blistering heat of the sun. It was not a pleasant situation for people in an open boat; and Mendez and Fieschi were kept busy, as Irving says, "animating the Indians who navigated their canoes, and who frequently paused at their labour." The poor Indians, evidently much in need of such animation, would often jump into the water to escape the intolerable heat, and after a short immersion there would return to their task. Things were better when the sun went down, and the cool night came on; half the Indians then slept and half rowed, while half of the Spaniards also slept and the other half, I suppose, "animated." Irving also says that the animating half "kept guard with their weapons in hand, ready to defend themselves in the case of any perfidy on

the part of their savage companions"; such perfidy being far enough from the thoughts of the savage companions, we may imagine, whose energies were entirely occupied with the oars. The next day was the same: savage companions rowing, Spaniards animating; Spaniards and savage companions alike drinking water copiously without regard for the smallness of their store. The second night was very hot, and the savage companions finished the water, with the result that on the third day the thirst became a torment, and at mid-day the poor companions struck work. Artful Mendez, however, had concealed two small kegs of water in his canoe, the contents of which he now administered in small doses, so that the poor Indians were enabled to take to their oars again, though with vigour much abated. Presumably the Spaniards had put up their weapons by this time, for the only perfidy shown on the part of the savage companions was that one of them died in the following night and had to be thrown overboard, while others lay panting on the bottom of the canoes; and the Spaniards had to take their turn at the oars, although they were if anything in a worse case than the Indians.

Late in the night, however, the moon rose, and Mendez had the joy of seeing its lower disc cut by a jagged line which proved to be the little islet or rock of Navassa, which lies off the westerly end of Española. New hope now animated the sufferers, and they pushed on until they were able to land on this rock, which proved to be without any vegetation whatsoever, but on the surface of which there were found some precious pools of rain-water. Mendez was able to restrain the frantic appetites of his fellow-countrymen, but the savage companions were less wise, and drank their fill; so that some of them died in torment on the spot, and others became seriously ill. The Spaniards were able to make a fire of driftwood, and boil some shell-fish which they found on shore, and they wisely spent the heat of the day crouching in the shade of the rocks, and put off their departure until the evening. It was then a comparatively easy journey for them to cross the dozen miles that separated them from Española, and they landed the next day in a pleasant harbour near Cape Tiburon. Fieschi, true to his promise, was then ready to start back for Jamaica with news of the safe accomplishment of the voyage; but the remnant of the crews, Spaniards and savage companions alike, had had enough of it, and no threats nor persuasions would induce them to embark again. Mendez, therefore, left his friends to enjoy some little repose before

continuing their journey to San Domingo, and, taking six natives of Española to row his canoe, set off along the coast towards the capital. He had not gone half-way when he learned that Ovando was not there, but was in Xaragua, so he left his canoe and struck northward through the forest until he arrived at the Governor's camp.

Ovando welcomed Mendez cordially, praised him for his plucky voyage, and expressed the greatest concern at the plight of the Admiral; but he was very busy at the moment, and was on the point of transacting a piece of business that furnished a dismal proof of the deterioration which had taken place in him. Anacaona—the lady with the daughter whom we remember—was now ruling over the province of Xaragua, her brother having died; and as perhaps her native subjects had been giving a little trouble to the Governor, he had come to exert his authority. The narrow official mind, brought into contact with native life, never develops in the direction of humanity; and Ovando had now for some time made the great discovery that it was less trouble to kill people than to try to rule over them wisely. There had evidently always been a streak of Spanish cruelty in him, which had been much developed by his residence in Española; and to cruelty and narrow officialdom he now added treachery of a very monstrous and horrible kind.

He announced his intention of paying a state visit to Anacaona, who thereupon summoned all her tributary chiefs to a kind of levee held in his honour. In the midst of the levee, at a given signal, Ovando's soldiers rushed in, seized the *caciques*, fastened them to the wooden pillars of the house, and set the whole thing on fire; the *caciques* being thus miserably roasted alive. While this was going on the atrocious work was completed by the soldiers massacring every native they could see—children, women, and old men included—and Anacaona herself was taken and hanged.

All these things Diego Mendez had to witness; and when they were over, Ovando still had excuses for not hurrying to the relief of the Admiral. He had embarked on a campaign of extermination against the natives, and he followed up his atrocities at Xaragua by an expedition to the eastern end of Española, where very much the same kind of business was transacted. Weeks and months passed in this bloody cruelty, and there

was always an excuse for putting off Mendez. Now it was because of the operations which he dignified by the name of wars, and now because he had no ship suitable for sending to Jamaica; but the truth was that Ovando, the springs of whose humanity had been entirely dried up during his disastrous reign in Española, did not want Columbus to see with his own eyes the terrible state of the island, and was callous enough to leave him either to perish or to find his own way back to the world. It was only when news came that a fleet of caravels was expected from Spain that Ovando could no longer prevent Mendez from going to San Domingo and purchasing one of them.

Ovando had indeed lost all but the outer semblance of a man; the soul or animating part of him had entirely gone to corruption. He had no interest in rescuing the Admiral; he had, on the contrary, great interest in leaving him unrescued; but curiosity as to his fate, and fear as to his actions in case he should return to Española, induced the Governor to make some effort towards spying out his condition. He had a number of trained rascals under his command—among them Diego de Escobar, one of Roldan's bright brigade; and Ovando had no sooner seen Mendez depart on his journey to San Domingo than he sent this Escobar to embark in a small caravel on a visit to Jamaica in order to see if the Admiral was still alive. The caravel had to be small, so that there could be no chance of bringing off the 130 men who had been left to perish there; and various astute instructions were given to Escobar in order to prevent his arrival being of any comfort or assistance to the shipwrecked ones. And so Escobar sailed; and so, in the month of March 1504, eight months after the vanishing of Mendez below the eastern horizon, the miserable company encamped on the two decaying ships on the sands at Puerto Santa Gloria descried with joyful excitement the sails of a Spanish caravel standing in to the shore.

CHAPTER V

THE ECLIPSE OF THE MOON

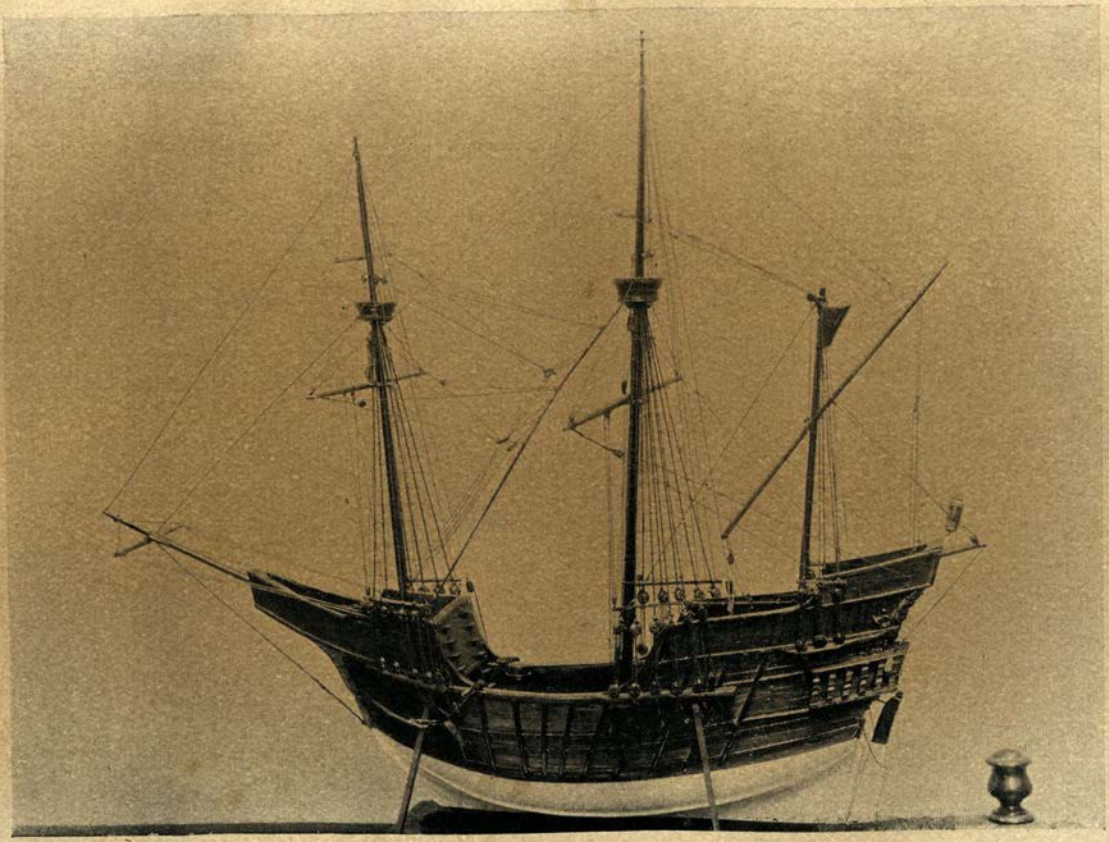
WE must now return to the little settlement on the coast of Jamaica—those two worn-out caravels, lashed together with ropes and bridged by an erection of wood and thatch, in which the forlorn little company was established. In all communities of men so situated there are alternate periods of action and reaction, and after the excitement incidental to the departure of Mendez, and the return of Bartholomew with the news that he had got safely away, there followed a time of reaction, in which the Spaniards looked dismally out across the empty sea and wondered when, if ever, their salvation would come. Columbus himself was now a confirmed invalid, and could hardly ever leave his bed under the thatch; and in his own condition of pain and depression his influence on the rest of the crew must inevitably have been less inspiriting than it had formerly been. The men themselves, moreover, began to grow sickly, chiefly on account of the soft, vegetable food, to which they were not accustomed, and partly because of their cramped quarters and the moist, unhealthy climate, which was the very opposite of what they needed after their long period of suffering and hardship at sea.

As the days and weeks passed, with no occupation save the daily business of collecting food that gradually became more and more nauseous to them, and of straining their eyes across the empty blue of the sea in an anxious search for the returning canoes of Fieschi, the spirits of the castaways sank lower and lower. Inevitably their discontent became articulate and broke out into murmurings. The usual remedy for this state of affairs is to keep the men employed at some hard work; but there was no work for them to do, and the spirit of dissatisfaction had ample opportunity to spread. As usual it soon took the form of hostility to the Admiral. They seem to have borne him no love nor gratitude for his masterly guiding of them through so many dangers; and now when he lay ill and in suffering his treacherous followers must needs fasten upon him the responsibility for

their condition. After a month or two had passed, and it became certain that Fieschi was not coming back, the castaways could only suppose that he and Mendez had either been captured by natives or had perished at sea, and that their fellow-countrymen must still be without news of the Admiral's predicament. They began to say also that the Admiral was banished from Spain; that there was no desire nor intention on the part of the Sovereigns to send an expedition to his relief, even if they had known of his condition; and that in any case they must long ago have given him up for lost.

When the pot boils the scum rises to the surface, and the result of these disloyal murmurings and agitations was to bring into prominence the two brothers, Francisco and Diego de Porras, who, it will be remembered, owed their presence with the expedition entirely to the Admiral's good nature in complying with the request of their brother-in-law Morales, who had apparently wished to find some distant occupation for them. They had been given honourable posts as officers, in which they had not proved competent; but the Admiral had always treated them with kindness and courtesy, regarding them more as guests than as servants. Who or what these Porras brothers were, where they came from, who were their father and mother, or what was their training, I do not know; it is enough for us to know that the result of it all had been the production of a couple of very mean scoundrels, who now found an opportunity to exercise their scoundrelism.

When they discovered the nature of the murmurings and discontent among the crew they immediately set themselves to work it up into open mutiny. They represented that, as Mendez had undoubtedly perished, there was no hope of relief from Española; that the Admiral did not even expect such relief, knowing that the island was forbidden ground to him. They insinuated that he was as well content to remain in Jamaica as anywhere else, since he had to undergo a period of banishment until his friends at Court could procure his forgiveness. They were all, said the Porras brothers, being made tools for the Admiral's convenience; as he did not wish to leave Jamaica himself, he was keeping them all there, to perish as likely as not, and in the meantime to form a bodyguard and establish a service for himself. The Porras brothers suggested that, under these circumstances, it would be as well to take a fleet of native



A CARAVEL, END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

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canoes from the Indians and make their own way to Española; the Admiral would never undertake the voyage himself, being too helpless from the gout; but it would be absurd if the whole company were to be allowed to perish because of the infirmities of one man. They reminded the murmurers that they would not be the first people who had rebelled with success against the despotic rule of Columbus, and that the conduct of the Sovereigns on a former occasion afforded them some promises that those who rebelled again would receive something quite different from punishment.

Christmas passed, the old year went out in this strange, unhomelike place, and the new year came in. The Admiral, as we have seen, was now almost entirely crippled and confined to his bed; and he was lying alone in his cabin on the second day of the year when Francisco de Porras abruptly entered. Something very odd and flurried about Porras; he jerks and stammers, and suddenly breaks out into a flood of agitated speech, in which the Admiral distinguishes a stream of bitter reproach and impertinence. The thing forms itself into nothing more nor less than a hurried, gabbling complaint; the people are dissatisfied at being kept here week after week with no hope of relief; they accuse the Admiral of neglecting their interests; and so on. Columbus, raising himself in his bed, tries to pacify Porras; gives him reasons why it is impossible for them to depart in canoes; makes every endeavour, in short, to bring this miserable fellow back to his duties. He is watching Porras's eye all the time; sees that he is too excited to be pacified by reason, and suspects that he has considerable support behind him; and suggests that the crew had better all be assembled and a consultation held as to the best course to pursue.

It is no good to reason with mutineers; and the Admiral has no sooner made this suggestion than he sees that it was a mistake. Porras scoffs at it; action, not consultation, is what he demands; in short, he presents an ultimatum to the Admiral —either to embark with the whole company at once, or stay behind in Jamaica at his own pleasure. And then, turning his back on Columbus and raising his voice, he calls out, "I am for Castile; those who choose may follow me!"

The shout was a signal, and immediately from every part of the vessel resounded the voices of the Spaniards, crying out that they would follow Porras. In the midst of the confusion Columbus hobbled out of his bed and staggered on to the deck; Bartholomew seized his weapons and prepared for action; but

the whole of the crew was not mutinous, and there was a large enough loyal remnant to make it unwise for the chicken-hearted mutineers to do more for the moment than shout. Some of them, it is true, were heard threatening the life of the Admiral; but he was hurried back to his bed by a few of the faithful ones, and others of them rushed up to the fierce Bartholomew, and with great difficulty persuaded him to drop his lance and retire to Christopher's cabin with him while they dealt with the offenders. They begged Columbus to let the scoundrels go if they wished to, as the condition of those who remained would be improved rather than hurt by their absence, and they would be a good riddance. They then went back to the deck and told Porras and his followers that the sooner they went the better, and that nobody would interfere with their going so long as they offered no one any violence.

The Admiral had some time before purchased some good canoes from the natives, and the mutineers seized ten of these and loaded them with native provisions. Every effort was made to add to the number of the disloyal ones; and when they saw their friends making ready to depart several of these did actually join. There were forty-eight who finally embarked with the brothers Porras; and there would have been more, but that so many of them were sick and unable to face the exposure of the voyage. As it was, those who remained witnessed with no very cheerful emotions the departure of their companions, and even in some cases fell to tears and lamentations. The infirm Admiral struggled out of his bed again, went round among the sick and the loyal, cheering them and comforting them, and promising to use every effort of the power left to him to secure an adequate reward for their loyalty when he should return to Spain.

We need only follow the career of Porras and his deserters for the present far enough to see them safely off the premises and out of the way of the Admiral and our narrative. They coasted along the shore of Jamaica to the eastward as Mendez had done, landing whenever they had a mind to, and robbing and outraging the natives; and they took a particularly mean and dirty revenge on the Admiral by committing all their robbings and outragings as though under his authority, assuring the offended Indians that what they did they did by his command and that what they took he would pay for; so that as

they went along they sowed seeds of grievance and hostility against the Admiral. They told the natives, moreover, that Columbus was an enemy of all Indians, and that they would be very well advised to kill him and get him out of the way.

They had not managed very well with the navigation of the canoes; and while they were waiting for fine weather at the eastern end of the island they collected a number of natives to act as oarsmen. When they thought the weather suitable they put to sea in the direction of Española. They were only about fifteen miles from the shore, however, when the wind began to head them and to send up something of a sea; not rough, but enough to make the crank and overloaded canoes roll heavily, for they had not been prepared, as those of Mendez were, with false keels and weather-boards. The Spaniards got frightened and turned back to Jamaica; but the sea became rougher, the canoes rolled more and more, they often shipped a quantity of water, and the situation began to look serious. All their belongings except arms and provisions were thrown overboard; but still, as the wind rose and the sea with it, it became obvious that unless the canoes were further lightened they would not reach the shore in safety. Under these circumstances the Spaniards forced the natives to leap into the water, where they swam about like rats as well as they could, and then came back to the canoes in order to hold on and rest themselves. When they did this the Spaniards slashed at them with their swords or cut off their hands, so that one by one they fell back, and, still swimming about feebly as well as they could with their bleeding hands or stumps of arms, the miserable wretches perished and sank at last.

By this dreadful expedient the Spaniards managed to reach Jamaica again, and when they landed they immediately fell to quarrelling as to what they should do next. Some were for trying to make the island of Cuba, the wind being favourable for that direction; others were for returning and making their submission to the Admiral; others for going back and seizing the remainder of his arms and stores; others for staying where they were for the present, and making another attempt to reach Española when the weather should be more favourable. This last plan, being the counsel of present inaction, was adopted by the majority of the rabble; so they settled themselves at a neighbouring Indian village, behaving in the manner with which we are familiar. A little later, when the weather was calm, they made another attempt at the voyage, but were driven back in

the same way; and being by this time sick of canoe voyages, they abandoned the attempt, and began to wander back westward through the island, maltreating the natives as before, and sowing seeds of bitter rancour and hostility against the Admiral, in whose neighbourhood we shall unfortunately hear of them again.

In the meantime their departure had somewhat relieved the condition of affairs on board the hulks. There were more provisions and there was more peace; the Admiral, rising above his own infirmities to the necessities of the occasion, moved unweariedly among the sick, cheering them and nursing them back into health and good humour, so that gradually the condition of the little colony was brought into better order and health than it had enjoyed since its establishment.

But now unfortunately the evil harvest sown by the Porras gang in their journey to the east of the island began to ripen. The supplies of provisions, which had hitherto been regularly brought by the natives, began to appear with less punctuality, and to fall off both in quantity and quality. The trinkets with which they were purchased had now been distributed in such quantities that they began to lose their novelty and value; sometimes the natives demanded a much higher price for the provisions they brought, and (having by this time acquired the art of bargaining) would take their stores away again if they did not get the price they asked. But even of this device they soon grew weary; from being irregular, the supplies of provisions from some quarters ceased altogether, and the possibilities of famine began to stare the unhappy castaways in the face. It must be remembered that they were in a very weak physical condition, and that among the so-called loyal remnant there were very few who were not invalids, and they were unable to get out into the island and forage for themselves. If the able-bodied handful were to sally forth in search of provisions, the hulks would be left defenceless and at the mercy of the natives, of whose growing hostility the Admiral had by this time discovered abundant evidence. Thus little by little the food supply diminished until there was practically nothing left, and the miserable company of invalids were confronted with the alternative of either dying of starvation or desperately attempting a canoe voyage.

It was from this critical situation that the spirit and resource of Columbus once more furnished a way of escape, and in these circumstances that he invented and worked a device that has since become famous—the great Eclipse Trick. Among his small library in the cabin of the ship was the book containing the astronomical tables of Regiomontanus; and from his study of this work he was aware that an eclipse of the moon was due on a certain date near at hand. He sent his Indian interpreter to visit the neighbouring *caciques*, summoning them to a great conference to be held on the evening of the eclipse, as the Admiral had matters of great importance to reveal to them. They duly arrived on the evening appointed; not the *caciques* alone, but large numbers of the native population, well prepared for whatever might take place. Columbus then addressed them through his interpreter, informing them that he was under the protection of a God who dwelt in the skies and who rewarded all who assisted him and punished all his enemies. He made an effective use of the adventures of Mendez and Porras, pointing out that Mendez, who took his voyage by the Admiral's orders, had got away in safety, but that Porras and his followers, who had departed in disobedience and mutiny, had been prevented by the heavenly power from achieving their object. He told them that his God was angry with them for their hostility and for their neglect to supply him with provisions; and that in token of His anger He was going to send them a dreadful punishment, as a sign of which they would presently see the moon change colour and lose its light, and the earth become dark.

This address was spun out as long as possible; but even so it was followed by an interval in which, we may be sure, Columbus anxiously eyed the serene orb of night, and doubtless prayed that Regiomontanus might not have made a mistake in his calculations. Some of the Indians were alarmed, some of them contemptuous; but it was pretty clearly realised on both sides that matters between them had come to a head; and probably if Regiomontanus, who had worked out these tables of figures and calculations so many years ago in his German home, had done his work carelessly or made a mistake, Columbus and his followers would have been massacred on the spot.

But Regiomontanus, God bless him! had made no mistake. Punctually to the appointed time the dark shadow began to steal over the moon's disc; its light gradually faded, and a ghostly darkness crept over the face of the world. Columbus, having seen that all was right with the celestial machinery, had

retired to his cabin; and presently he found himself besieged there in the dark night by crowds of natives frantically bringing what provisions they had and protesting their intention of continuing to bring them for the rest of their lives. If only the Admiral would ask his God to forgive them, there was no limit to the amount of provisions that he might have! The Admiral, piously thankful, and perhaps beginning to enjoy the situation a little, kept himself shut up in his cabin as though communing with the implacable Deity, while the darkness deepened over the land and the shore resounded with the howling and sobbing of the terrified natives. He kept a look-out on the sky; and when he saw that the eclipse was about to pass away, he came out and informed the natives that God had decided to pardon them on condition of their remaining faithful in the matter of provisions, and that as a sign of His mercy He would restore the light. The beautiful miracle went on through its changing phases; and, watching in the darkness, the terrified natives saw the silver edge of the moon appearing again, the curtain that had obscured it gradually rolling away, and land and sea lying visible to them and once more steeped in the serene light which they worshipped. It is likely that Christopher slept more soundly that night than he had slept for many nights before.

CHAPTER VI

RELIEF OF THE ADMIRAL

THERE was no further difficulty about provisions, which were punctually brought by the natives on the old terms; but the familiar spirit of sedition began to work again among the unhappy Spaniards, and once more a mutiny, led this time by the apothecary Bernardo, took form—the intention being to seize the remaining canoes and attempt to reach Española. This was the point at which matters had arrived, in March 1504, when as the twilight was falling one evening a cry was raised that there was a ship in sight, and presently a small caravel was seen standing in towards the shore. All ideas of mutiny were forgotten, and the crew assembled in joyful anticipation to await, as they thought, the coming of their deliverers. The caravel came on with the evening breeze; but while it was yet a long way off the shore it was seen to be lying to; a boat was lowered and rowed towards the harbour.

As the boat drew near Columbus could recognise in it Diego de Escobar, whom he remembered having condemned to death for his share in the rebellion of Roldan. He was not the man whom Columbus would have most wished to see at that moment. The boat came alongside the hulks, and a barrel of wine and a side of bacon, the sea-compliment customary on such occasions, was handed up. Greatly to the Admiral's surprise, however, Escobar did not come on board, but pushed his boat off and began to speak to Columbus from a little distance. He told him that Ovando was greatly distressed at the Admiral's misfortunes; that he had been much occupied by wars in Española, and had not been able to send a message to him before; that he greatly regretted he had no ship at present large enough to bring off the Admiral and his people, but that he would send one as soon as he had it. In the meantime the Admiral was to be assured that all his affairs in Española were being attended to faithfully, and that Escobar was instructed to bring back at once any letters which the Admiral might wish to write.

The coolness and unexpectedness of this message completely took away the breath of the unhappy Spaniards, who doubtless stood looking in bewilderment from Escobar to Columbus, unable to believe that the caravel had not been sent for their relief. Columbus, however, with a self-restraint which cannot be too highly praised, realised that Escobar meant what he said, and that by protesting against his action or trying to interfere with it he would only be putting himself in the wrong. He therefore retired immediately to his cabin and wrote a letter to Ovando, in which he drew a vivid picture of the distress of his people, reported the rebellion of the Porras brothers, and reminded Ovando that he relied upon the fulfilment of his promise to send relief. The letter was handed over to Escobar, who rowed back with it to his caravel and immediately sailed away with it into the night.

Before he could retire to commune with his own thoughts or to talk with his faithful brother, Columbus had the painful duty of speaking to his people, whose puzzled and disappointed faces must have cost him some extra pangs. He told them that he was quite satisfied with the message from Ovando, that it was a sign of kindness on his part thus to send them news in advance that relief was coming, that their situation was now known in San Domingo, and that vessels would soon be here to take them away. He added that he himself was so sure of these things that he had refused to go back with Escobar, but had preferred to remain with them and share their lot until relief should come. This had the desired effect of cheering the Spaniards; but it was far from representing the real sentiments of Columbus on the subject. The fact that Escobar had been chosen to convey this strange empty message of sympathy seemed to him suspicious; and, with his profound distrust of Ovando, Columbus began to wonder whether some further scheme might not be on foot to damage him in the eyes of the Sovereigns. He was convinced that Ovando had meant to let him starve on the island, and that the real purpose of Escobar's visit had been to find out what condition the Admiral was in, so that Ovando might know how to act. It is very hard to get at the truth of what these two men thought of each other. They were both suspicious, each was playing for his own hand, and Ovando was only a little more unscrupulous than Columbus; but there can be no doubt that whatever his motives may

have been Ovando acted with abominable treachery and cruelty in leaving the Admiral unrelieved for nearly nine months.

Columbus now tried to make use of the visit of Escobar to restore to allegiance the band of rebels that were wandering about in the neighbourhood under the leadership of the Porras brothers. Why he should have wished to bring them back to the ships is not clear, for by all accounts he was very well rid of them; but probably his pride as a commander was hurt by the thought that half of his company had defied his authority and were in a state of mutiny. At any rate he sent out an ambassador to Porras, offering to receive the mutineers back without any punishment, and to give them a free passage to Española in the vessels which were shortly expected, if they would return to their allegiance with him.

The folly of this overture was made manifest by the treatment which it received. It was bad enough to make advances to the Porras brothers, but it was still worse to have those advances repulsed, and that is what happened. The Porras brothers, being themselves incapable of any single-mindedness, affected not to believe in the sincerity of the Admiral's offer; they feared that he was laying some kind of trap for them; moreover, they were doing very well in their lawless way, and living very comfortably on the natives; so they told Columbus's ambassadors that his offer was declined. At the same time they undertook to conduct themselves in an amicable and orderly manner on condition that, when the vessels arrived, one of them should be apportioned to the exclusive use of the mutineers; and that in the meantime the Admiral should share with them his store of provisions and trinkets, as theirs were exhausted.

This was the impertinent decision of the Porras brothers; but it did not quite commend itself to their followers, who were fearful of the possible results if they should persist in their mutinous conduct. They were very much afraid of being left behind in Jamaica, and in any case, having attempted and failed in the main object of their mutiny, they saw no reason why they should refuse a free pardon. But the Porras brothers lied busily. They said that the Admiral was merely laying a trap in order to get them into his power, and that he would send them home to Spain in chains; and they even went so far as to assure their fellow-rebels that the story of a caravel having arrived

was not really true; but that Columbus, who was an adept in the arts of necromancy, had really made his people believe that they had seen a caravel in the dusk; and that if one had really arrived it would not have gone away so suddenly, nor would the Admiral and his brother and son have failed to take their passage in it.

To consolidate the effect of these remarkable statements on the still-wavering mutineers, the Porras brothers decided to commit them to an open act of violence which would successfully alienate them from the Admiral. They formed them, therefore, into an armed expedition, with the idea of seizing the stores remaining on the wreck and taking the Admiral personally. Columbus fortunately got news of this, as he nearly always did when there was treachery in the wind; and he sent Bartholomew to try to persuade them once more to return to their duty—a vain and foolish mission, the vanity and folly of which were fully apparent to Bartholomew. He duly set out upon it; but instead of mild words he took with him fifty armed men—the whole available able-bodied force, in fact—and drew near to the position occupied by the rebels.

The exhortation of the Porras brothers had meanwhile produced its effect, and it was decided that six of the strongest men among the mutineers should make for Bartholomew himself and try to capture or kill him. The fierce Adelantado, finding himself surrounded by six assailants, who seemed to be directing their whole effort against his life, swung his sword in a Bersark rage and slashed about him, to such good purpose that four or five of his assailants soon lay round him killed or wounded. At this point Francisco de Porras rushed in and cleft the shield held by Bartholomew, severely wounding the hand that held it; but the sword stuck in the shield, and while Porras was endeavouring to draw it out Bartholomew and some others closed upon him, and after a sharp struggle took him prisoner. The battle, which was a short one, had been meanwhile raging fiercely among the rest of the forces; but when the mutineers saw their leader taken prisoner, and many of their number lying dead or wounded, they scattered and fled, but not before Bartholomew's force had taken several prisoners. It was then found that, although the rebels had suffered heavily, none of Bartholomew's men were killed, and only one other besides himself was wounded. The next day the mutineers all came

in to surrender, submitting an abject oath of allegiance; and Columbus, always strangely magnanimous to rebels and insurgents, pardoned them all with the exception of Francisco de Porras, who, one is glad to know, was confined in irons to be sent to Spain for trial.

This submission, which was due to the prompt action of Bartholomew rather than to the somewhat feeble diplomacy of the Admiral, took place on March 20, and proved embarrassing to Columbus. He could put no faith in the oaths and protestations of the mutineers; and he was very doubtful about the wisdom of establishing them once more on the wrecks with the hitherto-orderly remnant. He therefore divided them up into several bands, and placing each under the command of an officer whom he could trust, he supplied them with trinkets and despatched them to different parts of the island, for the purpose of collecting provisions and carrying on barter with the natives. By this means the last month or two of this most trying and exciting sojourn on the island of Jamaica were passed in some measure of peace; and towards the end of June it was brought to an end by the arrival of two caravels. One of them was the ship purchased by Diego Mendez out of the three which had arrived from Spain; and the other had been despatched by Ovando in deference, it is said, to public feeling in San Domingo, which had been so influenced by Mendez's account of the Admiral's heroic adventures that Ovando dared not neglect him any longer. Moreover, if it had ever been his hope that the Admiral would perish on the island of Jamaica, that hope was now doomed to frustration; and, as he was to be rescued in spite of all, Ovando no doubt thought that he might as well, for the sake of appearances, have a hand in the rescue.

The two caravels, laden with what was worth saving from the two abandoned hulks, and carrying what was left of the Admiral's company, sailed from Jamaica on June 28, 1504. Columbus's joy, as we may imagine, was deep and heartfelt. He said afterwards to Mendez that it was the happiest day of his life, for that he had never hoped to leave the place alive.

The mission of Mendez, then, had been successful, although he had had to wait for eight months to fulfil it. He himself, in accordance with Columbus's instructions, had gone to Spain in

another caravel of the fleet out of which he had purchased the relieving ship; and as he passes out of our narrative we may now take our farewell of him. Among the many men employed in the Admiral's service no figure stands out so brightly as that of Diego Mendez; and his record, almost alone of those whose service of the Admiral earned them office and distinction, is unblotted by any stain of crime or treachery. He was as brave as a lion and as faithful as a dog, and throughout his life remained true to his ideal of service to the Admiral and his descendants. He was rewarded by King Ferdinand for his distinguished services, and allowed to bear a canoe on his coat-of-arms; he was with the Admiral at his death-bed at Valladolid, and when he himself came to die thirty years afterwards in the same place he made a will in which he incorporated a brief record of the events of the adventurous voyage in which he had borne the principal part, and also enshrined his devotion to the name and family of Columbus. His demands for himself were very modest, although there is reason to fear that they were never properly fulfilled. He was curiously anxious to be remembered chiefly by his plucky canoe voyage; and in giving directions for his tomb, and ordering that a stone should be placed over his remains, he wrote: "In the centre of the said stone let a canoe be carved, which is a piece of wood hollowed out in which the Indians navigate, because in such a boat I navigated three hundred leagues; and let some letters be placed above it saying: *Canoa.*" The epitaph that he chose for himself was in the following sense:—

Here lies the Honourable Gentleman

DIEGO MENDEZ

He greatly served the royal crown of Spain in the discovery and conquest of the Indies with the Admiral Don Christopher Columbus of glorious memory who discovered them, and afterwards by himself, with his own ships, at his own expense
He died, etc.
He begs from charity a PATERNOSTER
and an AVE MARIA

Surely he deserves them, if ever an honourable gentleman did.

CHAPTER VII

THE HERITAGE OF HATRED

ALTHOUGH the journey from Jamaica to Española had been accomplished in four days by Mendez in his canoe, the caravels conveying the party rescued from Puerto Santa Gloria were seven weary weeks on this short voyage; a strong north-west wind combining with the west-going current to make their progress to the north-west impossible for weeks at a time. It was not until the 13th of August 1504 that they anchored in the harbour of San Domingo, and Columbus once more set foot, after an absence of more than two years, on the territory from the governorship of which he had been deposed.

He was well enough received by Ovando, who came down in state to meet him, restored to him his own house, and saw that he was treated with the distinction suitable to his high station. The Spanish colony, moreover, seemed to have made something of a hero of Columbus during his long absence, and they received him with enthusiasm. But his satisfaction in being in San Domingo ended with that. He was constantly made to feel that it was Ovando and not he who was the ruler there; and Ovando emphasised the difference between them by numerous acts of high-handed authority, some of them of a kind calculated to be extremely mortifying to the Admiral. Thus he insisted upon releasing Porras, whom Columbus had confined in chains; and he talked of punishing those faithful followers of Columbus who had taken part in the battle between Bartholomew and the rebels, because in this fight some of the followers of Porras had been killed. Acts like these produced weary bickerings and arguments between Ovando and Columbus, unprofitable to them, unprofitable to us. The Admiral seems now to have relapsed into a condition in which he cared only for two things, his honours and his emoluments. Over every authoritative act of Ovando there was a weary squabble between him and the Admiral, Ovando claiming his right of jurisdiction over the whole territory of the New World, includ-

ing Jamaica, and Columbus insisting that by his commission and letters of authority he had been placed in sole charge of the members of his own expedition.

And then, as regards his emoluments, the Admiral considered himself (and not without justice) to have been treated most unfairly. By the extravagant terms of his original agreement he was, as we know, entitled to a share of all rents and dues, as well as of the gold collected; but it had been no one's business to collect these for him, and every one's business to neglect them. No one had cared; no one had kept any accounts of what was due to the Admiral; he could not find out what had been paid and what had not been paid. He accused Ovando of having impeded his agent Carvajal in his duty of collecting the Admiral's revenues, and of disobeying the express orders of Queen Isabella in that matter; and so on—a state of affairs the most wearisome, sordid, and unprofitable in which any man could be involved.

And if Columbus turned his eyes from the office in San Domingo inland to that Paradise which he had entered twelve years before, what change and ruin, dreary, horrible, and complete, did he not discover! The birds still sang, and the nights were still like May in Cordova; but upon that happy harmony the sound of piteous cries and shrieks had long since broken, and a long and black December night of misery had spread its pall over the island. Wherever he went, Columbus found the same evidence of ruin and desolation. Where once innumerable handsome natives had thronged the forests and the villages, there were now silence and smoking ruin, and the few natives that he met were emaciated, terrified, dying. Did he reflect, I wonder, that some part of the responsibility of all this horror rested on him? that many a system of island government, the machinery of which was now fed by a steady stream of human lives, had been set going by him in ignorance, or greed of quick commercial returns? It is probable that he did not; for he now permanently regarded himself as a much-injured man, and was far too much occupied with his own wrongs to realise that they were as nothing compared with the monstrous stream of wrong and suffering that he had unwittingly sent flowing into the world.

In the island under Ovando's rule Columbus saw the logical results of his own original principles of government, which had

recognised the right of the Christians to possess the persons and labours of the heathen natives. Las Casas, who was living in Española as a young priest at this time, and was destined by long residence there and in the West Indies to qualify himself as their first historian, saw what Columbus saw, and saw also the even worse things that happened in after years in Cuba and Jamaica; and it is to him that we owe our knowledge of the condition of island affairs at this time. The colonists whom Ovando had brought out had come very much in the spirit that in our own day characterised the rush to the north-western goldfields of America. They brought only the slightest equipment, and were no sooner landed at San Domingo than they set out into the island like so many picnic parties, being more careful to carry vessels in which to bring back the gold than proper provisions and equipment to support them in the labour of finding it. The roads, says Las Casas, swarmed like ant-hills with these adventurers rushing forth to the mines, which were about twenty-five miles distant from San Domingo; they were in the highest spirits, and they made it a kind of race as to who should get there first. They thought they had nothing to do but to pick up shining lumps of gold; and when they found that they had to dig and delve in the hard earth, and to dig systematically and continuously, with a great deal of digging for very little gold, their spirits fell. They were not used to dig; and it happened that most of them began in an unprofitable spot, where they digged for eight days without finding any gold. Their provisions were soon exhausted; and in another week they were back again in San Domingo, tired, famished, and bitterly disappointed. They had no genius for steady labour; most of them were virtually without means; and although they lived in San Domingo on what they had as long as possible, they were soon starving there, and selling the clothes off their backs to procure food. Some of them took situations with the other settlers, more fell victims to the climate of the island and their own imprudences and distresses; and a thousand of them had died within two years.

Ovando had revived the enthusiasm for mining by two enactments. He reduced the share of discovered gold payable to the Crown, and he developed Columbus's system of forced labour to such an extent that the mines were entirely worked by it. To each Spaniard, whether mining or farming, so many natives were allotted. It was not called slavery; the natives were supposed to be paid a minute sum, and their employers

were also expected to teach them the Christian religion. That was the plan. The way in which it worked was that, a body of native men being allotted to a Spanish settler for a period, say, of six or eight months—for the enactment was precise in putting a period to the term of slavery—the natives would be marched off, probably many days' journey from their homes and families, and set to work under a Spanish foreman. The work, as we have already seen, was infinitely harder than that to which they were accustomed; and most serious of all, it was done under conditions that took all the heart out of the labour. A man will toil in his own garden or in tilling his own land with interest and happiness, not counting the hours which he spends there; knowing in fact that his work is worth doing, because he is doing it for a good reason. But put the same man to work in a gang merely for the aggrandisement of some other over-man, and the heart and cheerfulness will soon die out of him,

It was so with these children of the sun. They were put to toil ten times harder than any they had ever done before, and they were put to it under the lash. The light diet of their habit had been sufficient to support them in their former existence of happy idleness and dalliance, and they had not wanted anything more than their cassava bread and a little fish and fruit; now, however, they were put to work at a pressure which made a very different kind of feeding necessary to them, and this they did not get. Now and then, a handful of pork would be divided among a dozen of them; but they were literally starved, and were accustomed to scramble like dogs for the bones that were thrown from the tables of the Spaniards, which bones they ground up and mixed with their bread so that no portion of them might be lost. They died in numbers under these hard conditions, and, compared with their lives, their deaths must often have been happy. When the time came for them to go home they were generally utterly worn out and crippled, and had to face a long journey of many days with no food to support them but what they could get on the journey; and the roads were strewn with the dead bodies of those who fell by the way.

And unspeakably worse things happened to them than labour and exhaustion. It became the custom among the Spaniards to regard the lives of the natives as of far less value than those of the dogs that were sometimes set upon them in sport. A Spaniard riding along would make a wager with his fellow that he would cut the head off a native with one stroke

of his sword; and many attempts would be laughingly made, and many living bodies hideously mutilated and destroyed, before the feat would be accomplished. Another sport was one similar to pig-sticking as it is practised in India, except that instead of pigs native women and children were stuck with the lances. There was no kind of mutilation and monstrous cruelty that was not practised. If there be any powers of hell, they stalked at large through the forests and valleys of Española. Lust and bloody cruelty, of a kind not merely indescribable but unrealisable by sane men and women, drenched the once-happy island with anguish and terror. And in payment for it the Spaniards undertook to teach the heathen the Christian religion.

The five chiefs who had ruled with justice and wisdom over the island of Española in the early days of Columbus were all dead, wiped out by the wave of wild death and cruelty that had swept over the island. The gentle Guacanagari, when he saw the desolation that was beginning to overwhelm human existence, had fled into the mountains, hiding his face in shame from the sons of men, and had miserably died there. Caonabo, Lord of the House of Gold, fiercest and bravest of them all, who first realised that the Spaniards were enemies to the native peace, after languishing in prison in the house of Columbus at Isabella for some time, had died in captivity during the voyage to Spain. Anacaona his widow, the Bloom of the Gold, that brave and beautiful woman, whose admiration of the Spaniards had by their bloody cruelties been turned into detestation, had been shamefully betrayed and ignominiously hanged. Behechio, her brother, the only *cacique* who did not sue for peace after the first conquest of the island by Christopher and Bartholomew Columbus, was dead long ago of wounds and sorrow. Guarionex, the Lord of the Vega Real, who had once been friendly enough, who had danced to the Spanish pipe and learned the *Paternoster* and *Ave Maria*, and whose progress in conversion to Christianity the seduction of his wives by those who were converting him had interrupted, after wandering in the mountains of Ciguay had been imprisoned in chains, and drowned in the hurricane of June 30, 1502.

The fifth chief, Cotabanama, Lord of the province of Higua, made the last stand against Ovando in defence of the native right to existence, and was only defeated after severe

battles and dreadful slaughters. His territory was among the mountains; and his last insurrection was caused, as so many others had been, by the intolerable conduct of the Spaniards towards the wives and daughters of the Indians. Collecting all his warriors, Cotabanama attacked the Spanish posts in his neighbourhood. At every engagement his troops were defeated and dispersed, but only to collect again, fight again with even greater fury, be defeated and dispersed again, and rally again against the Spaniards. They fought literally to the death. After every battle the Spaniards made a massacre of all the natives they could find, old men, children, and pregnant women being alike put to the sword or burned in their houses. When their companions fell beside them, instead of being frightened they became more furious; and when they were wounded they would pluck the arrows out of their bodies and hurl them back at the Spaniards, falling dead in the very act. After one such severe defeat and massacre the natives scattered for many months, hiding among the mountains and trying to collect and succour their decimated families; but the Spaniards, who with their dogs grew skilful at tracking the Indians and found it pleasant sport, came upon them in the places of refuge where little groups of them were sheltering their women and children, and there slowly and cruelly slaughtered them, often with the addition of tortures and torments in order to induce them to reveal the whereabouts of other bands. When it was possible the Spaniards sometimes hanged thirteen of them in a row in commemoration of their Blessed Saviour and the Twelve Apostles; and while they were hanging, and before they had quite died, they would hack at them with their swords in order to test the edge of the steel. At the last stand, when the fierceness and bitterness of the contest rose to a height on both sides, Cotabanama was captured and a plan made to broil him slowly to death; but for some reason this plan was not carried out, and the brave chief was taken to San Domingo and mercifully hanged like a thief.

After that there was never any more resistance; it was simply a case of extermination, which the Spaniards easily accomplished by cutting off the heads of women as they passed by, and impaling infants and little children on their lances as they rode through the villages. Thus, in the twelve years since the discovery of Columbus, between half a million and a million

natives perished ; and as the Spanish colonisation spread afterwards from island to island, and the banner of civilisation and Christianity was borne farther abroad throughout the Indies, the same hideous process was continued. In Cuba, in Jamaica, throughout the Antilles, the cross and the sword, the whiplash and the Gospel advanced together ; wherever the Host was consecrated, hideous cries of agony and suffering broke forth ; until happily, in the fulness of time, the dire business was complete, and the whole of the people who had inhabited this garden of the world were exterminated and their blood and race wiped from the face of the earth.

. . . Unless, indeed, blood and race and hatred be imperishable things ; unless the faithful Earth that bred and reared the race still keeps in her soil, and in the waving branches of the trees and the green grasses, the sacred essences of its blood and hatred ; unless in the full cycle of Time, when that suffering flesh and blood shall have gone through all the changes of substance and condition, from corruption and dust through flowers and grasses and trees and animals back into the living body of mankind again, it shall one day rise up terribly to avenge that horror of the past. Unless Earth and Time remember, O Children of the Sun ! for men have forgotten, and on the soil of your Paradise the African negro, learned in the vices of Europe, erects his monstrous effigy of civilisation and his grotesque mockery of freedom ; unless it be through his brutish body, into which the blood and hatred with which the soil of Española was soaked have now passed, that they shall dreadfully strike at the world again.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADMIRAL COMES HOME

ON September 12, 1504, Christopher Columbus did many things for the last time. He who had so often occupied himself in ports and harbours with the fitting out of ships and preparations for a voyage now completed at San Domingo the simple preparations for the last voyage he was to take. The ship he had come in from Jamaica had been refitted and placed under the command of Bartholomew, and he had bought another small caravel in which he and his son were to sail. For the last time he superintended those details of fitting out and provisioning which were now so familiar to him; for the last time he walked in the streets of San Domingo and mingled with the direful activities of his colony; he looked his last upon the place where the vital scenes of his life had been set, for the last time weighed anchor, and took his last farewell of the seas and islands of his discovery. A little steadfast looking, a little straining of the eyes, a little heart-aching no doubt, and Española has sunk down into the sea behind the white wake of the ships; and with its fading away the span of active life allotted to this man shuts down, and his powerful opportunities for good or evil are withdrawn.

There was something great and heroic about the Admiral's last voyage. Wind and sea rose up as though to make a last bitter attack upon the man who had disclosed their mysteries and betrayed their secrets. He had hardly cleared the island before the first gale came down upon him and dismasted his ship, so that he was obliged to transfer himself and his son to Bartholomew's caravel and send the disabled vessel back to Española. The shouting sea, as though encouraged by this triumph, hurled tempest after tempest upon the one lonely small ship that was staggering on its way to Spain; and the final duel between this great seaman and the vast elemental power that he had so often outwitted began in earnest. One little ship, one enfeebled man to be destroyed by the power of the sea: that was the problem, and there were thousands of

miles of sea-room, and two months of time to solve it in! Gale after gale rose and drove unceasingly against the ship. A mast was sprung and had to be cut away; another, and the wood-work from the forecastles and high stern works had to be stripped and lashed round the crazy mainmast to preserve it from wholesale destruction. Another gale, and the mast had to be shortened, for even reinforced as it was it would not bear the strain; and so crippled, so buffeted, this very small ship leapt and staggered on her way across the Atlantic, keeping her bowsprit pointed to that region of the foamy emptiness where Spain was.

The Admiral lay crippled in his cabin listening to the rush and bubble of the water, feeling the blows and recoils of the unending battle, hearkening anxiously to the straining of the timbers and the vessel's agonised complainings under the pounding of the seas. We do not know what his thoughts were; but we may guess that they looked backward rather than forward, and that often they must have been prayers that the present misery would come somehow or other to an end. Up on deck brother Bartholomew, who has developed some grievous complaint of the jaws and teeth—complaint not known to us more particularly, but dreadful enough from that description—does his duty also, with that heroic manfulness that has marked his whole career; and somewhere in the ship young Ferdinand is sheltering from the sprays and breaking seas, finding his world of adventure grown somewhat gloomy and sordid of late, and feeling that he has now had his fill of the sea.... Shut your eyes and let the illusions of time and place fade from you; be with them for a moment on this last voyage. Hear that eternal foaming and crashing of great waves, the sudden blow, pause, and pouring of green water, the yelling and shrieking of wind in cordage, the cracking and slatting of the sails, the mad slashing of loose ropes, the painful swinging, and climbing up and diving down, and sinking and staggering and helpless strivings of the small ship in the waste of water. The sea is as empty as chaos, nothing for days and weeks but that infinite tumbling surface and heaven of grey storm-clouds; a world of salt surges encircled by horizons of dim foam. Time and place are nothing; the agony and pain of such moments are eternal.

But the two brothers, grim and gigantic in their sea power, subtle as the wind itself in their sea wit, win the battle. Over the thousands of miles of angry surges they urge that small ship towards calm and safety; until one day the sea begins to abate

a little, and through the spray and tumult of waters the dim loom of land is seen. The sea falls back disappointed and finally conquered by Christopher Columbus, whose ship, battered, crippled, and strained, comes back out of the wilderness of waters and glides quietly into the smooth harbour of San Lucar, November 7, 1504. There were no guns nor bells to greet the Admiral; his only salute was in the thunder of the conquered seas; and he was carried ashore to San Lucar, and thence to Seville, a sick and broken man.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST DAYS

COLUMBUS, for whom rest and quiet were the first essentials, remained in Seville from November 1504 to May 1505, when he joined the Court at Segovia and afterwards at Salamanca and Valladolid, where he remained till his death, a year later. During this last period, when all other activities were practically impossible to him, he fell into a state of letter-writing—for the most part long, wearisome complainings and explainings in which he poured out a copious flood of tears and self-pity for the loss of his gold.

It has generally been claimed that Columbus was in bitter penury and want of money; but a close examination of the letters and other documents relating to this time shows that in his last days he was not poor in any true sense of the word. He was probably a hundred times richer than any of his ancestors had ever been; he had money to give and money to spend; the banks honoured his drafts; his credit was apparently indisputable. But compared with the fabulous wealth to which he would by this time have been entitled if his original agreement with the Crown of Spain had been faithfully carried out he was no doubt poor. There is no evidence that he lacked any comfort or alleviation that money could buy; indeed he never had any great craving for the things that money can buy—only for money itself. There must have been many rich people in Spain who would gladly have entertained him in luxury and dignity; but he was not the kind of man to set much store by such things except in so far as they were a decoration and advertisement of his position as a great man. He had set himself to the single task of securing what he called his rights; and in these days of sunset he seems to have been illumined by some glimmer of the early glory of his first inspiration. He wanted the payment of his dues now, not so much for his own enrichment, but as a sign to the world that his great position as Admiral and Viceroy was recognised, so that his dignities and estates

might be established and consolidated in a form which he would be able to transmit to his remote posterity.

Since he wrote so copiously and so constantly in these last days, the best picture of his mood and condition is afforded in his letters to his son Diego; letters which, in spite of their infinitely wearisome recapitulation and querulous complaint, should be carefully read by those who wish to keep in touch with the Admiral to the end.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, November* 21, 1504

"VERY DEAR SON,—I received your letter by the courier. You did well in remaining yonder to remedy our affairs somewhat and to employ yourself now in our business. Ever since I came to Castile, the Lord Bishop of Palencia has shown me favour and has desired that I should be honoured. Now he must be entreated that it may please him to occupy himself in remedying my many grievances and in ordering that the agreement and letters of concession which their Highnesses gave me be fulfilled, and that I be indemnified for so many damages. And he may be certain that if their Highnesses do this, their estate and greatness will be multiplied to them in an incredible degree. And it must not appear to him that forty thousand pesos in gold is more than a representation of it, because they might have had a much greater quantity if Satan had not hindered it by impeding my design; for, when I was taken away from the Indies, I was prepared to give them a sum of gold incomparable to forty thousand pesos. I make oath, and this may be for thee alone, that the damage to me in the matter of the concessions their Highnesses have made to me, amounts to ten millions each year, and never can be made good. You see what will be, or is, the injury to their Highnesses in what belongs to them, and they do not perceive it. I write at their disposal and will strive to start yonder. My arrival and the rest is in the hands of our Lord. His mercy is infinite. What is done and is to be done, St Augustine says is already done before the creation of the world. I write also to these other Lords named in the letter of Diego Mendez. Commend me to their mercy and tell them of my going as I have said above. For certainly I feel great fear, as the cold is so inimical to this, my infirmity, that I may have to remain on the road.

"I was very much pleased to hear the contents of your letter and what the King our Lord said, for which you kissed his royal hands. It is certain that I have served their Highnesses with as much diligence and love as though it had been to gain Paradise, and more, and if I have been at fault in anything it has been because it was impossible or because my knowledge and strength were not sufficient. God, our Lord, in such a case, does not require more from persons than the will.

"At the request of the Treasurer Morales, I left two brothers in the Indies, who are called Porras. The one was captain and the other auditor. Both were without capacity for these positions: and I was confident that they could fill them, because of love for the person who sent them to me. They both became more vain than they had been. I forgave them many incivilities, more than I would do with a relation, and their offences were such that they merited another punishment than a verbal

reprimand. Finally they reached such a point that even had I desired, I could not have avoided doing what I did. The records of the case will prove whether I lie or not. They rebelled on the island of Jamaica, at which I was as much astonished as I would be if the sun's rays should cast darkness. I was at the point of death, and they martyrised me with extreme cruelty during five months and without cause. Finally I took them all prisoners, and immediately set them free, except the captain, whom I was bringing as a prisoner to their Highnesses. A petition which they made to me under oath, and which I send you with this letter, will inform you at length in regard to this matter, although the records of the case explain it fully. These records and the Notary are coming on another vessel, which I am expecting from day to day. The Governor of Santo Domingo took this prisoner. His courtesy constrained him to do this. I had a chapter in my instructions in which their Highnesses ordered all to obey me, and that I should exercise civil and criminal justice over all those who were with me: but this was of no avail with the Governor, who said that it was not understood as applying in his territory. He sent the prisoner to these Lords who have charge of the Indies without inquiry or record or writing. They did not receive him, and both brothers go free. It is not wonderful to me that our Lord punishes. They went there with shameless faces. Such wickedness or such cruel treason were never heard of. I wrote to their Highnesses about this matter in the other letter, and said that it was not right for them to consent to this offence. I also wrote to the Lord Treasurer that I begged him as a favour not to pass sentence on the testimony given by these men until he heard me. Now it will be well for you to remind him of it anew. I do not know how they dare to go before him with such an undertaking. I have written to him about it again and have sent him the copy of the oath, the same as I send to you and likewise to Doctor Angulo and the Licentiate Zapata. I commend myself to the mercy of all, with the information that my departure yonder will take place in a short time.

"I would be glad to receive a letter from their Highnesses and to know what they order. You must procure such a letter if you see the means of so doing. I also commend myself to the Lord Bishop and to Juan Lopez, with the reminder of illness and of the reward for my services.

"You must read the letters which go with this one in order to act in conformity with what they say. Acknowledge the receipt of his letter to Diego Mendez. I do not write him as he will learn everything from you, and also because my illness prevents it.

"It would be well for Carbajal and Jeronimo [1] to be at the Court at this time, and talk of our affairs with these Lords and with the Secretary.

"Done in Seville, November 21.

"Your father who loves you more than himself.

S.
S. A. S.
X M Y
Xρo FERENS."

[1] Jeronimo de Aguero, a landowner in Española and a friend of Columbus.

"I wrote again to their Highnesses entreating them to order that these people who went with me should be paid, because they are poor and it is three years since they left their homes. The news which they bring is more than extraordinary. They have endured infinite dangers and hardships. I did not wish to rob the country, so as not to cause scandal, but reason advises its being populated, and then gold will be obtained freely without scandal. Speak of this to the Secretary and to the Lord Bishop and to Juan Lopez and to whomever you think it advisable to do so."

The Bishop of Palencia referred to in this letter is probably Bishop Fonseca—probably, because it is known that he did become Bishop of Palencia, although there is a difference of opinion among historians as to whether the date of his translation to that see was before or after this letter. No matter, except that one is glad to think that an old enemy—for Fonseca and Columbus had bitter disagreements over the fitting out of various expeditions—had shown himself friendly at last.

Letter written by CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *November* 28, 1504

"VERY DEAR SON,—I received your letters of the 15th of this month. It is eight days since I wrote you and sent the letter by a courier. I enclosed unsealed letters to many other persons, in order that you might see them, and having read them, seal and deliver them. Although this illness of mine troubles me greatly, I am preparing for my departure in every way. I would very much like to receive the reply from their Highnesses and wish you might procure it: and also I wish that their Highnesses would provide for the payment of these poor people, who have passed through incredible hardships and have brought them such great news that infinite thanks should be given to God, our Lord, and they should rejoice greatly over it. If I . . .[1] the *Paralipomenon*[2] and the Book of Kings and the 'Antiquities' of Josephus, with very many others, will tell what they know of this. I hope in our Lord to depart this coming week, but you must not write less often on that account. I have not heard from Carbajal and Jeronimo. If they are there, commend me to them. The time is such that both Carbajals ought to be at Court, if illness does not prevent them. My regards to Diego Mendez.

"I believe that his truth and efforts will be worth as much as the lies of the Porras brothers. The bearer of this letter is Martin de Gamboa. I am sending by him a letter to Juan Lopez and a letter of credit. Read the letter to Lopez and then give it to him. If you write me, send the letters to Luis de Soria that he may send them wherever I am, because if I go in a litter, I believe it will be by La Plata.[3] May our Lord have

[1] Word missing: *miento* is suggested by Navarrete—"If I *lie*," etc.
[2] The Book of Chronicles.
[3] The old Roman road from Merida to Salamanca.

you in His holy keeping. Your uncle has been very sick and is now, from trouble with his jaws and his teeth.

"Done in Seville, November 28.

"Your father who loves you more than himself.

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Xpo FERENS."[1]

Bartholomew Columbus and Ferdinand were remaining with Christopher at Seville; Bartholomew probably very nearly as ill as the Admiral, although we do not hear so many complaints about it. At any rate Diego, being at Court, was the great mainstay of his father; and you can see the sick man sitting there alone with his grievances, and looking to the next generation for help in getting them redressed. Diego, it is to be feared, did not receive these letters with so much patience and attention as he might have shown, nor did he write back to his invalid father with the fulness and regularity which the old man craved. It is a fault common to sons. Those who are sons will know that it does not necessarily imply lack of affection on Diego's part; those who are fathers will realise how much Christopher longed for verbal assurance of interest and affection, even though he did not doubt their reality. News of the serious illness of Queen Isabella had evidently reached Columbus, and was the chief topic of public interest.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, December* 1, 1504

"VERY DEAR SON,—Since I received your letter of November 15, I have heard nothing from you. I wish that you would write me more frequently. I would like to receive a letter from you each hour. Reason must tell you that now I have no other repose. Many couriers come each day, and the news is of such a nature and so abundant that on hearing it all my hair stands on end; it is so contrary to what my soul desires. May it please the Holy Trinity to give health to the Queen, our Lady, that she may settle what has already been placed under discussion. I wrote you by another courier Thursday, eight days ago. The courier must already be on his way back here. I told you in that letter that my departure was certain, but that the hope of my arrival there, according to experience, was very uncertain, because my sickness is so bad, and the cold is so well suited to aggravate it, that I could not well avoid remaining in some inn on the road. The litter and everything were ready. The weather became so violent that it appeared impossible to every one to start when it was getting so bad, and that it was better for so well known a person as myself to take care of myself and try to regain my health rather than place myself in danger. I told you in those letters what I now say, that you decided well in remaining there (at

such a time), and that it was right to commence occupying yourself with our affairs; and reason strongly urges this. It appears to me that a good copy should be made of the chapter of that letter which their Highnesses wrote me where they say they will fulfil their promises to me and will place you in possession of everything: and that this copy should be given to them with another writing telling of my sickness, and that it is now impossible for me to go and kiss their Royal feet and hands, and that the Indies are being lost, and are on fire in a thousand places, and that I have received nothing, and am receiving nothing, from the revenues derived from them, and that no one dares to accept or demand anything there for me, and I am living upon borrowed funds. I spent the money which I got there in bringing those people who went with me back to their homes, for it would be a great burden upon my conscience to have left them there and to have abandoned them. This must be made known to the Lord Bishop of Palencia, in whose favour I have so much confidence, and also to the Lord Chamberlain.[1] I believed that Carbajal and Jeronimo would be there at such a time. Our Lord is there, and He will order everything as He knows it to be best for us.

"Carbajal reached here yesterday. I wished to send him immediately with this same order, but he excused himself profusely, saying that his wife was at the point of death. I shall see that he goes, because he knows a great deal about these affairs. I will also endeavour to have your brother and your uncle go to kiss the hands of their Highnesses, and give them an account of the voyage if my letters are not sufficient. Take good care of your brother. He has a good disposition, and is no longer a boy. Ten brothers would not be too many for you. I never found better friends to right or to left than my brothers. We must strive to obtain the government of the Indies and then the adjustment of the revenues. I gave you a memorandum which told you what part of them belongs to me. What they gave to Carbajal was nothing and has turned to nothing. Whoever desires to do so takes merchandise there, and so the eighth is nothing, because, without contributing the eighth, I could send to trade there without rendering account or going in company with anyone. I said a great many times in the past that the contribution of the eighth would come to nothing. The eighth and the rest belongs to me by reason of the concession which their Highnesses made to me, as set forth in the book of my Privileges, and also the third and the tenth. Of the tenth I received nothing, except the tenth of what their Highnesses receive; and it must be the tenth of all the gold and other things which are found and obtained, in whatever manner it may be, within this Admiralship, and the tenth of all the merchandise which goes and comes from there, after the expenses are deducted. I have already said that in the 'Book of Privileges,' the reason for this and for the rest which is before the Tribunal of the Indies here in Seville is clearly set forth.

"We must strive to obtain a reply to my letter from their Highnesses, and to have them order that these people be paid. I wrote in regard to this subject four days ago, and sent the letter by Martin de Gamboa, and you must have seen the letter of Juan Lopez with your own.

"It is said here that it has been ordered that three or four Bishops of the Indies shall be sent or created, and that this matter is referred to

[1] Juan Cabrero, an old friend and protector of Columbus.

the Lord Bishop of Palencia. After having commended me to his Worship, tell him that I believe it will best serve their Highnesses for me to talk with him before this matter is settled.

"Commend me to Diego Mendez, and show him this letter. My illness permits me to write only at night, because in the daytime my hands are deprived of strength. I believe that a son of Francisco Pinelo will carry this letter. Entertain him well, because he does everything for me that he can, with much love and a cheerful goodwill. The caravel which broke her mast in starting from Santo Domingo has arrived in the Algarves. She brings the records of the case of the Porras brothers. Such ugly things and such grievous cruelty as appear in this matter never were seen. If their Highnesses do not punish it, I do not know who will dare to go out in their service with people.

"To-day is Monday. I will endeavour to have your uncle and brother start to-morrow. Remember to write me very often, and tell Diego Mendez to write at length. Each day messengers go from here yonder. May our Lord have you in His holy keeping.

"Done in Seville, December 1.

"Your father who loves you as himself.

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S. A. S
X M Y
Xpo FERENS.*

The gout from which the Admiral suffered made riding impossible to him, and he had arranged to have himself carried to Court on a litter when he was able to move. There is a grim and dismal significance in the particular litter that had been chosen: it was no other than the funeral bier which belonged to the Cathedral of Seville, and had been built for Cardinal Mendoza. A minute of the Cathedral Chapter records the granting to Columbus of the use of this strange conveyance; but one is glad to think that he ultimately made his journey in a less grim though more humble method. But what are we to think of the taste of a man who would rather travel in a bier, so long as it had been associated with the splendid obsequies of a cardinal, than in the ordinary litter of everyday use? It is but the old passion for state and splendour thus dismally breaking out again.

He speaks of living on borrowed funds and of having devoted all his resources to the payment of his crew; but that may be taken as an exaggeration. He may have borrowed, but the man who can borrow easily from banks cannot be regarded as a poor man. One is nevertheless grateful for these references, since they commemorate the Admiral's unfailing loyalty to those who shared his hardships, and his unwearied efforts to see that they received what was due to them. Pleasant also are the

evidences of warm family affection in those simple words of brotherly love, and the affecting advice to Diego that he should love his brother Ferdinand as Christopher loved Bartholomew. It is a pleasant oasis in this dreary, sordid wailing after thirds and tenths and eighths. Good Diego Mendez, that honourable gentleman, was evidently also at Court at this time, honestly striving, we may be sure, to say a good word for the Admiral.

Some time after this letter was written, and before the writing of the next, news reached Seville of the death of Queen Isabella. For ten years her heart had been wrung by many sorrows. Her mother had died in 1496; the next year her only son, and heir to the crown, had followed; and within yet another year had died her favourite daughter, the Queen of Portugal. Her other children were all scattered with the exception of Juana, whose semi-imbecile condition caused her parents an anxiety greater even than that caused by death. As Isabella's life thus closed sombrely in, she applied herself more closely and more narrowly to such pious consolations as were available. News from Flanders of the scandalous scenes between Philip and Juana in the summer of 1504 brought on an illness from which she really never recovered, a kind of feverish distress of mind and body in which her only alleviation was the transaction of such business as was possible for her in the direction of humanity and enlightenment. She still received men of intellect and renown, especially travellers. But she knew that her end was near, and as early as October she had made her will, in which her wishes as to the succession and government of Castile were clearly laid down. During October and November her life thus beat itself away in a succession of duties faithfully performed, tasks duly finished, preparations for the great change duly made. She died, as she would have wished to die, surrounded by friends who loved and admired her, and fortified by the last rites of the Church for her journey into the unknown. Date, November 26, 1504, in the fifty-fourth year of her age.

Columbus had evidently received the news from a public source, and felt mortified that Diego should not have written him a special letter.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, December* 3, 1504

"VERY DEAR SON,—I wrote you at length the day before yesterday and sent it by Francisco Pinelo, and with this letter I send you a very full memorandum. I am very much astonished not to receive a letter from you or from anyone else, and this astonishment is shared by all who know me. Every one here has letters, and I, who have more reason to

ISABELLA OF CASTILE

expect them, have none. Great care should be taken about this matter. The memorandum of which I have spoken above says enough, and on this account I do not speak more at length here. Your brother and your uncle and Carbajal are going yonder. You will learn from them what is not said here. May our Lord have you in His holy keeping.

" Done in Seville, December 3.

" Your father who loves you more than himself.

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: S . A . S :
X M Y
Xρo FERENS.[11]

Document of COLUMBUS *addressed to his Son,* DIEGO, *and intended to accompany the preceding letter*

" A memorandum for you, my very dear son, Don Diego, of what occurs to me at the present time which must be done :—The principal thing is, affectionately and with great devotion to commend the soul of the Queen, our Lady, to God. Her life was always Catholic and Holy and ready for all the things of His holy service, and for this reason it must be believed that she is in His holy glory and beyond the desires of this rough and wearisome world. Then the next thing is to be watchful and exert one's self in the service of the King, our Lord, and to strive to keep him from being troubled. His Highness is the head of Christendom. See the proverb which says that when the head aches, all the members ache. So that all good Christians should entreat that he may have long life and health ; and those of us who are obliged to serve him more than others must join in this supplication with great earnestness and diligence. This reason prompts me now with my severe illness to write you what I am writing here, that his Highness may dispose matters for his service : and for the better fulfilment I am sending your brother there, who, although he is a child in days, is not a child in understanding ; and I am sending your uncle and Carbajal, so that if this, my writing, is not sufficient, they, together with yourself, can furnish verbal evidence. In my opinion there is nothing so necessary for the service of his Highness as the disposition and remedying of the affair of the Indies.

" His Highness must now have there more than 40,000 or 50,000 gold pieces. I learned when I was there that the Governor had no desire to send it to him. It is believed among the other people as well that there will be 150,000 pesos more, and the mines are very rich and productive. Most of the people there are common and ignorant, and care very little for the circumstances. The Governor is very much hated by all of them, and it is to be feared that they may at some time rebel. If this should occur, which God forbid, the remedy for the matter would then be difficult : and so it would be if injustice were used toward them, either here or in other places, with the great fame of the gold. My opinion is that his Highness should investigate this affair quickly and by means of a person who is interested and who can go there with 150 to 200 people well equipped, and remain there until it is well settled and without suspicion, which cannot be done in less than three months : and that an endeavour be made to raise two or three forces there. The gold there

is exposed to great risk, as there are very few people to protect it. I say that there is a proverb here which says that the presence of the owner makes the horse fat. Here and wherever I may be, I shall serve their Highnesses with joy, until my soul leaves this body.

"Above I said that his Highness is the head of the Christians, and that it is necessary for him to occupy himself in preserving them and their lands. For this reason people say that he cannot thus provide a good government for all these Indies, and that they are being lost and do not yield a profit, neither are they being handled in a reasonable manner. In my opinion it would serve him to intrust this matter to some one who is distressed over the bad treatment of his subjects.

"I wrote a very long letter to his Highness as soon as I arrived here, fully stating the evils which require a prompt and efficient remedy at once. I have received no reply, nor have I seen any provision made in the matter. Some vessels are detained in San Lucar by the weather. I have told these gentlemen of the Board of Trade that they must order them held until the King, our Lord, makes provision in the matter, either by some person with other people, or by writing. This is very necessary and I know what I say. It is necessary that the authorities should order all the ports searched diligently, to see that no one goes yonder to the Indies without licence. I have already said that there is a great deal of gold collected in straw houses without any means of defence, and there are many disorderly people in the country, and that the Governor is hated, and that little punishment is inflicted and has been inflicted upon those who have committed crimes and have come out with their treasonable conduct approved.

"If his Highness decides to make some provision, it must be done at once, so that these vessels may not be injured.

"I have heard that three Bishops are to be elected and sent to Española. If it pleases his Highness to hear me before concluding this matter, I will tell in what manner God our Lord may be well served and his Highness served and satisfied.

"I have given lengthy considerations to the provision for Española."

Yes, the Queen is in His Holy Glory, and beyond the desires of this rough and wearisome world; but we are not; we are still in a world where fifty thousand gold pieces can be of use to us, and where a word spoken in season, even in such a season of darkness, may have its effect with the King. A strange time to talk to the King about gold; and perhaps Diego was wiser and kinder than his father thought in not immediately taking this strange document to King Ferdinand.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, December* 13, 1504

"VERY DEAR SON,—It is now eight days since your uncle and your brother and Carbajal left here together, to kiss the royal hands of his Highness, and to give an account of the voyage, and also to aid you in the negotiation of whatever may prove to be necessary there.

"Don Ferdinand took from here 150 ducats to be expended at his

discretion. He will have to spend some of it, but he will give you what he has remaining. He also carries a letter of credit for these merchants. You will see that it is very necessary to be careful in dealing with them, because I had trouble there with the Governor, as every one told me that I had there 11,000 or 12,000 castellanos, and I had only 4000. He wished to charge me with things for which I am not indebted, and I, confiding in the promise of their Highnesses, who ordered everything restored to me, decided to leave these charges in the hope of calling him to account for them. If anyone has money there, they do not dare ask for it, on account of his haughtiness. I very well know that after my departure he must have received more than 5000 castellanos. If it were possible for you to obtain from his Highness an authoritative letter to the Governor, ordering him to send the money without delay and a full account of what belongs to me, by the person I might send there with my power of attorney, it would be well; because he will not give it in any other manner, neither to my friend Diaz nor Velasquez, and they dare not even speak of it to him. Carbajal will very well know how this must be done. Let him see this letter. The 150 ducats which Luis de Soria sent you when I came are paid according to his desire.

"I wrote you at length, and sent the letter by Don Ferdinand, álso a memorandum. Now that I have thought over the matter further, I say that, since at the time of my departure their Highnesses said over their signature and verbally, that they would give me all that belongs to me, according to my privileges—that the claim for the third or the tenth and eighth mentioned in the memorandum must be relinquished, and instead the chapter of their letter must be shown where they write what I have said, and all that belongs to me must be required, as you have it in writing in the 'Book of Privileges,' in which is also set forth the reason for my receiving the third, eighth, and tenth; as there is always an opportunity to reduce the sum desired by a person, although his Highness says in his letter that he wishes to give me all that belongs to me. Carbajal will understand me very well if he sees this letter, and every one else as well, as it is very clear. I also wrote to his Highness and finally reminded him that he must provide at once for this affair of the Indies, that the people there may not be disturbed, and also reminding him of the promise stated above. You ought to see the letter.

"With this letter I send you another letter of credit for the said merchants. I have already explained to you the reasons why expenses should be moderated. Show your uncle due respect, and treat your brother as an elder brother should treat a younger. You have no other brother, and praised be our Lord, he is such a one as you need very much. He has proved and proves to be very intelligent. Honour Carbajal and Jeronimo and Diego Mendez. Commend me to them all. I do not write them as there is nothing to write and this messenger is in haste. It is frequently rumoured here that the Queen, whom God has, has left an order that I be restored to the possession of the Indies. On arrival, the notary of the fleet will send you the records and the original of the case of the Porras brothers. I have received no news from your uncle and brother since they left. The water has been so high here that the river entered the city.

"If Agostin Italian and Francisco de Grimaldo do not wish to give you the money you need, look for others there who are willing to give it

to you. On the arrival here of your signature I will at once pay them all that you have received: for at present there is not a person here by whom I can send you money.

"Done to-day, Friday, December 13, 1504.

"Your father who loves you more than himself.

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X M Y
Xpo FERENS.[11]

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to his Son*, DON DIEGO, *December 21, 1504*

"VERY DEAR SON,—The Lord Adelantado and your brother and Carbajal left here sixteen days ago to go to the Court. They have not written me since. Don Ferdinand carried 150 ducats. He must spend what is necessary, and he carries a letter, that the merchants may furnish you with money. I have sent you another letter since, with the endorsement of Francisco de Ribarol, by Zamora, the courier, and told you that if you had made provision for yourself by means of my letter, not to use that of Francisco de Ribarol. I say the same now in regard to another letter which I send you with this one, for Francisco Soria, which letter I send you for greater security that you may not fail to be provided with money. I have already told you how necessary it is to be careful in the expenditure of the money, until their Highnesses give us law and justice. I also told you that I had spent 1200 castellanos in bringing these people to Castile, of which his Highness owes me the greater part, and I wrote him in regard to it asking him to order the account settled.

"If possible I should like to receive letters here each day. I complain of Diego Mendez and of Jeronimo, as they do not write me: and then of the others who do not write when they arrive there. We must strive to learn whether the Queen, whom God has in His keeping, said anything about me in her will, and we must hurry the Lord Bishop of Palencia, who caused the possession of the Indies by their Highnesses and my remaining in Castile, for I was already on my way to leave it. And the Lord Chamberlain of his Highness must also be hurried. If by chance the affair comes to discussion, you must strive to have them see the writing which is in the 'Book of Privileges' which shows the reason why the third, eighth, and tenth are owing me, as I told you in another letter.

"I have written to the Holy Father in regard to my voyage, as he complained of me because I did not write him. I send you a copy of the letter. I would like to have the King, our Lord, or the Lord Bishop of Palencia see it before I send the letter, in order to avoid false representations.

"Camacho has told a thousand falsehoods about me. To my regret I ordered him arrested. He is in the church. He says that after the Holidays are past, he will go there if he is able. If I owe him, he must show by what reason; for I make oath that I do not know it, nor is it true.

"If without importunity a licence can be procured for me to go on

mule-back, I will try to leave for the Court after January, and I will even go without this licence. But haste must be made that the loss of the Indies, which is now imminent, may not take place. May our Lord have you in His keeping.

" Done to-day, December 21.

" Your father who loves you more than himself.

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: S . A . S :
X M Y
Xpo FERENS.[11]

" This tenth which they give me is not the tenth which was promised me. The ' Privileges ' tell what it is, and there is also due me the tenth of the profit derived from merchandise and from all other things, of which I have received nothing. Carbajal understands me well. Also remind Carbajal to obtain a letter from his Highness for the Governor, directing him to send his accounts and the money I have there, at once. And it would be well that a *Repostero* of his Highness should go there to receive this money, as there must be a large amount due me. I will strive to have these gentlemen of the Board of Trade send also to say to the Governor that he must send my share together with the gold belonging to their Highnesses. But the remedy for the other matter must not be neglected there on this account. I say that 7000 or 8000 pesos must have passed to my credit there, which sum has been received since I left, besides the other money which was not given to me.

" To my very dear son Don Diego
at the Court."[12]

All this struggling for the due payment of eighths and tenths makes wearisome reading, and we need not follow the Admiral into his distinctions between one kind of tenth and another. There is much to be said on his side, it must be remembered; he had not received what was due to him; and although he was not in actual poverty, his only property in this world consisted of these very thirds and eighths and tenths. And if we are inclined to think poorly of the Admiral for his pertinacity, what are we to think of the people who took advantage of their high position to ignore consistently the just claims made upon them?

There is no end to the Admiral's letter-writing at this time. Fortunately for us his letter to the Pope has been lost, or else we should have to insert it here; and we have had enough of his theological essays. As for the Queen's will, there was no mention of the Admiral in it; and her only reference to the Indies showed that she had begun to realise some of the disasters following his rule there, for the provisions that are concerned with the New World refer exclusively to the treatment of the natives, to whose

succour, long after they were past succour, the hand of Isabella was stretched out from the grave. The licence to travel on mule-back which the Admiral asked for was made necessary by a law which had been passed forbidding the use of mules for this purpose throughout Spain. There had been a scarcity of horses for mounting the royal cavalry, and it was thought that the breeding of horses had been neglected on account of the greater cheapness and utility of mules. It was to encourage the use and breeding of horses that an interdict was laid on the use of mules, and only the very highest persons in the land were allowed to employ them.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to his Son,* DON DIEGO, *December 29, 1504*

"VERY DEAR SON,—I wrote you at length and sent it by Don Ferdinand, who left to go yonder twenty-three days ago to-day, with the Lord Adelantado and Carbajal, from whom I have since heard nothing. Sixteen days ago to-day I wrote you and sent it by Zamora, the courier, and I sent you a letter of credit for these merchants endorsed by Francisco de Ribarol, telling them to give you the money you might ask for. And then, about eight days ago, I sent you by another courier a letter endorsed by Francisco Soria, and these letters are directed to Pantaleon and Agostin Italian, that they may give it to you. And with these letters goes a copy of a letter which I wrote to the Holy Father in regard to the affairs of the Indies, that he might not complain of me any more. I sent this copy for his Highness to see, or the Lord Bishop of Palencia, so as to avoid false representations. The payment of the people who went with me has been delayed. I have provided for them here what I have been able. They are poor and obliged to go in order to earn a living. They decided to go yonder. They have been told here that they will be dealt with as favourably as possible, and this is right, although among them there are some who merit punishment more than favours. This is said of the rebels. I gave these people a letter for the Lord Bishop of Palencia. Read it, and if it is necessary for them to go and petition his Highness, urge your uncle and brother and Carbajal to read it also, so that you can all help them as much as possible. It is right and a work of mercy, for no one ever earned money with so many dangers and hardships and no one has ever rendered such great service as these people. It is said that Camacho and Master Bernal wish to go there—two creatures for whom God works few miracles : but if they go, it will be to do harm rather than good. They can do little because the truth always prevails, as it did in Española, from which wicked people by means of falsehoods have prevented any profit being received up to the present time. It is said that this Master Bernal was the beginning of the treason. He was taken and accused of many misdemeanours, for each one of which he deserved to be quartered. At the request of your uncle and of others he was pardoned, on condition that if he ever said the least word against me and my state the pardon should be revoked and he should be under condemnation. I send you a copy of the case in this letter. I send you a legal document about Camachi. For more than eight days

he has not left the church on account of his rash statements and falsehoods. He has a will made by Terreros, and other relatives of the latter have another will of more recent date, which renders the first will null, as far as the inheritance is concerned: and I am entreated to enforce the latter will, so that Camacho will be obliged to restore what he has received. I shall order a legal document drawn up and served upon him, because I believe it is a work of mercy to punish him, as he is so unbridled in his speech that someone must punish him without the rod: and it will not be so much against the conscience of the chastiser, and will injure him more. Diego Mendez knows Master Bernal and his works very well. The Governor wished to imprison him at Española and left him to my consideration. It is said that he killed two men there with medicines in revenge for something of less account than three beans. I would be glad of the licence to travel on mule-back and of a good mule, if they can be obtained without difficulty. Consult all about our affairs, and tell them that I do not write them in particular on account of the great pain I feel when writing. I do not say that they must do the same, but that each one must write me and very often, for I feel great sorrow that all the world should have letters from there each day, and I have nothing, when I have so many people there. Commend me to the Lord Adelantado in his favour, and give my regards to your brother and to all the others.

"Done at Seville, December 29.

"Your father who loves you more than himself:

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S.A.S
X M Y
Xpo FERENS.[11]

"I say further that if our affairs are to be settled according to conscience, that the chapter of the letter which their Highnesses wrote me when I departed, in which they say they will order you placed in possession, must be shown; and the writing must also be shown which is in the 'Book of Privileges,' which shows how in reason and in justice the third and eighth and the tenth are mine. There will always be opportunity to make reductions from this amount.[12]

Columbus's requests were not all for himself; nothing could be more sincere or generous than the spirit in which he always strove to secure the just payment of his mariners. Otherwise he is still concerned with the favour shown to those who were treasonable to him. Camacho was still hiding in a church, probably from the wrath of Bartholomew Columbus; but Christopher has more subtle ways of punishment. A legal document, he considers, will be better than a rod; "it will not be so much against the conscience of the chastiser, and will injure him (the chastised) more."

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, January* 18, 1505

"VERY DEAR SON,—I wrote you at length by the courier who will arrive there to-day, and sent you a letter for the Lord Chamberlain. I intended to inclose in it a copy of that chapter of the letter from their Highnesses in which they say they will order you placed in possession; but I forgot to do it here. Zamora, the courier, came. I read your letter and also those of your uncle and brother and Carbajal, and felt great pleasure in learning that they had arrived well, as I had been very anxious about them. Diego Mendez will leave here in three or four days with the order of payment prepared. He will take a long statement of everything, and I will write to Juan Velasquez. I desire his friendship and service. I believe that he is a very honourable gentleman. If the Lord Bishop of Palencia has come, or comes, tell him how much pleased I have been with his prosperity, and that if I go there I must stop with his Worship even if he does not wish it, and that we must return to our first fraternal love. And that he could not refuse it because my service will force him to have it thus. I said that the letter for the Holy Father was sent that his Worship might see it if he was there, and also the Lord Archbishop of Seville, as the King might not have opportunity to read it. I have already told you that the petition to their Highnesses must be for the fulfilment of what they wrote me about the possession and of the rest which was promised me. I said that this chapter of the letter must be shown them and said that it must not be delayed, and that this is advisable for an infinite number of reasons. His Highness may believe that, however much he gives me, the increase of his exalted dominions and revenue will be in the proportion of 100 to 1, and that there is no comparison between what has been done and what is to be done. The sending of a Bishop to Española must be delayed until I speak to his Highness. It must not be as in the other cases when it was thought to mend matters and they were spoiled. There have been some cold days here and they have caused me great fatigue and fatigue me now. Commend me to the favour of the Lord Adelantado. May our Lord guard and bless you and your brother. Give my regards to Carbajal and Jeronimo. Diego Mendez will carry a full pouch there. I believe that the affair of which you wrote can be very easily managed. The vessels from the Indies have not arrived from Lisbon. They brought a great deal of gold, and none for me. So great a mockery was never seen, for I left there 60,000 pesos smelted. His Highness should not allow so great an affair to be ruined, as is now taking place. He now sends to the Governor a new provision. I do not know what it is about. I expect letters each day. Be very careful about expenditures, for it is necessary.

"Done January 18.

"Your father who loves you more than himself.

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Xpo FERENS.[1]

There is playful reference here to Fonseca, with whom Columbus was evidently now reconciled; and he was to be

buttonholed and made to read the Admiral's letter to the Pope. Diego Mendez is about to start, and is to make a "long statement"; and in the meantime the Admiral will write so many long letters as he has time for. Was there no friend at hand, I wonder, with wit enough to tell the Admiral that every word he wrote about his grievances was sealing his doom, so far as the King was concerned? No human being could have endured with patience this continuous heavy firing at long range to which the Admiral subjected his friends at Court; every post that arrived was loaded with a shrapnel of grievances, the dull echo of which must have made the ears of those who heard it ache with weariness. Things were evidently humming in Española; large cargoes of negroes had been sent out to take the place of the dead natives, and under the harsh driving of Ovando the mines were producing heavily. The vessels that arrived from the Indies brought a great deal of gold; "but none for me."

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to his Son*, DON DIEGO, *February* 5, 1505

"VERY DEAR SON,—Diego Mendez left here Monday, the 3rd of this month. After his departure I talked with Amerigo Vespucci, the bearer of this letter, who is going yonder, where he is called in regard to matters of navigation. He was always desirous of pleasing me. He is a very honourable man. Fortune has been adverse to him as it has been to many others. His labours have not profited him as much as reason demands. He goes for me, and is very desirous of doing something to benefit me if it is in his power. I do not know of anything in which I can instruct him to my benefit, because I do not know what is wanted of him there. He is going with the determination to do everything for me in his power. See what he can do to profit me there, and strive to have him do it; for he will do everything, and will speak and will place it in operation; and it must all be done secretly so that there may be no suspicion.

"I have told him all that could be told regarding this matter, and have informed him of the payment which has been made to me and is being made. This letter is for the Lord Adelantado also, that he may see how Amerigo Vespucci can be useful, and advise him about it. His Highness may believe that his ships went to the best and richest of the Indies, and if anything remains to be learned more than has been told, I will give the information yonder verbally, because it is impossible to give it in writing. May our Lord have you in His Holy keeping.

"Done in Seville, February 5.

"Your father who loves you more than himself.

: S :
: S . A . S :
X M Y
Xρo FERENS."

This letter has a significance which raises it out of the ruck of this complaining correspondence. Amerigo Vespucci had just returned from his long voyage in the West, when he had navigated along an immense stretch of the coast of America, both north and south, and had laid the foundations of a fame which was, for a time at least, to eclipse that of Columbus. Probably neither of the two men realised it at this interview, or Columbus would hardly have felt so cordially towards the man who was destined to rob him of so much glory. As a matter of fact the practical Spaniards were now judging entirely by results; and a year or two later, when the fame of Columbus had sunk to insignificance, he was merely referred to as the discoverer of certain islands, while Vespucci, who after all had only followed in his lead, was hailed as the discoverer of a great continent. Vespucci has been unjustly blamed for this state of affairs, although he could no more control the public estimate of his services than Columbus could. He was a more practical man than Columbus, and he made a much better impression on really wise and intelligent men; and his discoveries were immediately associated with trade and colonial development, while Columbus had little to show for his discoveries during his lifetime but a handful of gold dust and a few cargoes of slaves. At any rate it was a graceful act on the part of Vespucci, whose star was in the ascendant, to go and seek out the Admiral, whose day was fast verging to night; it was one of those disinterested actions that live and have a value of their own, and that shine out happily amid the surrounding murk and confusion.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS *to* DON DIEGO, *his Son, February* 25, 1505

"VERY DEAR SON,—The Licentiate de Zea is a person whom I desire to honour. He has in his charge two men who are under prosecution at the hands of justice, as shown by the information which is enclosed in this letter. See that Diego Mendez places the said petition with the others, that they may be given to his Highness during Holy Week for pardon. If the pardon is granted, it is well, and if not, look for some other manner of obtaining it. May our Lord have you in His Holy keeping. Done in Seville, February 25, 1505. I wrote you and sent it by Amerigo Vespucci. See that he sends you the letter unless you have already received it.

"Your father. Xpo FERENS.//"[1]

This is the last letter of Columbus known to us—otherwise an entirely unimportant document, dealing with the most

FERDINAND OF ARRAGON

transient affairs. With it we gladly bring to an end this exposure of a trying and querulous period, which speaks so eloquently for itself that the less we say and comment on it the better.

In the month of May the Admiral was well enough at last to undertake the journey to Segovia. He travelled on a mule, and was accompanied by his brother Bartholomew and his son Ferdinand. When he reached the Court he found the King civil and outwardly attentive to his recitals, but apparently content with a show of civility and outward attention. Columbus was becoming really a nuisance; that is the melancholy truth. The King had his own affairs to attend to; he was already meditating a second marriage, and thinking of the young bride he was to bring home to the vacant place of Isabella; and the very iteration of Columbus's complaints and demands had made them lose all significance for the King. He waived them aside with polite and empty promises, as people do the demands of importunate children; and finally, to appease the Admiral and to get rid of the intolerable nuisance of his applications, he referred the whole question, first to Archbishop Deza, and then to the body of councillors which had been appointed to interpret Queen Isabella's will. The whole question at issue was whether or not the original agreement with Columbus, which had been made before his discoveries, should be carried out. The King, who had foolishly subscribed to it simply as a matter of form, never believing that anything much could come of it, was determined that it should not be carried out, as it would give Columbus a wealth and power to which no mere subject of a crown was entitled. The Admiral held fast to his privileges; the only thing that he would consent to submit to arbitration was the question of his revenues; but his titles and territorial authorities he claimed absolutely. Of course the council did exactly what the King had done. They talked about the thing a great deal, but they did nothing. Columbus was an invalid and broken man, who might die any day, and it was obviously to their interest to gain time by discussion and delay—a cruel game for Christopher, who knew his days on earth to be numbered, and who struggled in that web of Time in which mortals try to hurry the events of the present and delay the events of the future.

Meanwhile Philip of Austria and his wife Juana, Isabella's

daughter, had arrived from Flanders to assume the crown of Castile, which Isabella had bequeathed to them. Columbus saw a chance for himself in this coming change, and he sent Bartholomew as an envoy to greet the new Sovereigns, and to enlist their services on the Admiral's behalf. Bartholomew was very well received, but he was too late to be of use to the Admiral, whom he never saw again; and this is our farewell to Bartholomew, who passes out of our narrative here. He went to Rome after Christopher's death on a mission to the Pope concerning some fresh voyages of discovery; and in 1508 he made, so far as we know, his one excursion into romance, when he assisted at the production of an illegitimate little girl—his only descendant. He returned to Española under the governorship of his nephew Diego, and died there in 1514—stern, valiant, brotherly soul, whose devotion to Christopher must be for ever remembered and honoured with the name of the Admiral.

From Segovia Columbus followed the Court to Salamanca and thence to Valladolid, where his increasing illness kept him a prisoner after the Court had left to greet Philip and Juana. He had been in attendance upon it for nearly a year, and without any results, and now, as his infirmity increased, he turned to the settling of his own affairs, and drawing up of wills and codicils—all very elaborate and precise. In these occupations his worldly affairs were duly rounded off; and on May 19, 1506, having finally ratified a will which he had made in Segovia a year before, in which the descent of his honours was entailed upon Diego and his heirs, or failing him Ferdinand and his heirs, or failing him Bartholomew and his heirs, he turned to the settlement of his soul.

His illness had increased gradually but surely, and he must have known that he was dying. He was not without friends, among them the faithful Diego Mendez, his son Ferdinand, and a few others. His lodging was in a small house in an unimportant street of Valladolid, now called the "Calle de Colon"; the house, No. 7, still standing, and to be seen by curious eyes. As the end approached, the Admiral, who was being attended by Franciscan monks, had himself clothed in a Franciscan habit; and so, on the 20th May 1506, he lay upon his bed breathing out his life.

". . . And as strange thoughts
Grow with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life too, Popes, Cardinals, and priests,
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day . . ."

we do not know what his thoughts were, as the shadows grew deeper about him, as the sounds of the world, the noises from the sunny street, grew fainter, and the images and sounds of memory clearer and louder. Perhaps as he lay there with closed eyes he remembered things long forgotten, as dying people do; sounds and smells of the Vico Dritto di Ponticello, and the feel of the hot paving-stones down which his childish feet used to run to the sea; noises of the sea also, the drowning swish of waters and sullen roar of breakers sounding to anxiously strained ears in the still night; bright, sunlit pictures of far-away tropical shores, with handsome olive figures glistening in the sun; the sight of strange faces, the sound of strange speech, the smell of a strange land; the glitter of gold; the sudden death-shriek breaking the stillness of some sylvan glade; the sight of blood on the grass. . . .

The Admiral's face undergoes a change; there is a stir in the room; some one signs to the priest Gaspar, who brings forth his sacred wafer and holy oils and administers the last sacraments. The wrinkled eyelids flutter open; the sea-worn voice feebly frames the responses; the dying eyes are fixed on the crucifix; and—"*In manus tuas Domine*"—the Admiral is dead.

He was in his fifty-sixth year, already an old man in body and mind; and his death went entirely unmarked except by his immediate circle of friends. Even Peter Martyr, who was in Valladolid just before and just after it, and who was writing a series of letters to various correspondents giving all the news of his day, never thought it worth while to mention that Christopher Columbus was dead. His life flickered out in the completest obscurity. It is not even known where he was first buried; but probably it was in the Franciscan convent at Valladolid. This, however, was only a temporary resting-place; and a few years later his body was formally interred in the choir of the monastery of Las Cuevas at Seville, there to lie for thirty years surrounded by continual chantings. After

that it was translated to the cathedral in San Domingo; rested there for 250 years; and then, on the cession of that part of the island to France, the body was removed to Cuba. But the Admiral was by this time nothing but a box of bones and dust; as also were his brother Bartholomew and his son Diego, and Diego's son, all collected together in that place. There were various examinations of the bone-boxes; one, supposed to be the Admiral's, was taken to Cuba and solemnly buried there; and lately, after the conquest of the island in the Spanish-American War, this box of bones was elaborately conveyed to Seville, where it now rests.

But in the meanwhile the Chapter of the cathedral in San Domingo had made new discoveries and examinations; had found another box of bones, which bore to them authentic signs that the dust it contained was the Admiral's and not his grandson's; and in spite of the Academy of History at Madrid, it is indeed far from unlikely that the Admiral's dust does not lie in Spain nor Cuba at all, but in San Domingo still. Whole books have been written about these boxes of bones; learned societies have argued about them, experts have examined the bones and the boxes with microscopes; and meantime the dust of Columbus, if we take the view that an error was committed in the transference to Cuba,[1] is not even collected all in one box. A sacrilegious official acquired some of it when the boxes were opened, and distributed it among various curiosity-hunters, who have preserved it in caskets of crystal and silver. Thus a bit of it was until lately worn by an American lady in a crystal locket; a bit of it lies in a glass vial in a New York mansion; other portions in the Lennox Library, New York, in the Vatican, and in the University of Pavia. A strange destiny for that sea-worn body; and yet how really unimportant in the long lapse and oblivion of Time! For the dust, although for the moment we may detain it here or there, returns at last to universal dust, and matter to universal matter; only the spirit remains, and "mine own will I bring again, even as I did some time from the deep of the sea."

[1] The balance of expert opinion is in favour of this view.

THE HOUSE AT VALLADOLID, WHERE COLUMBUS DIED

CHAPTER X

THE MAN COLUMBUS

IT is not in any leaden box or crystal vase that we must search for the true remains of Christopher Columbus. Through these pages we have traced, so far as has been possible, the course of his life, and followed him in what he did; all of which is but preparation for our search for the true man, and just estimate of what he was. We have seen, dimly, what his youth was; that he came of poor people who were of no importance to the world at large; that he earned his living as a working man; that he became possessed of an Idea; that he fought manfully and diligently until he had realised it in living acts; and that then he found himself in a position beyond his powers to deal with, not being a strong swimmer to hold his own in the rapid tide of events which he himself had set flowing; and we have seen him sinking at last in that tide, weighed down by the very things for which he had bargained and stipulated. If these pages had been devoted to a critical examination of the historical documents on which his life-story is based we should also have found that he continually told lies about himself, and misrepresented facts when the truth proved inconvenient to him; that he was vain and boastful to a degree that can only excite our compassion. He was naturally and sincerely pious, and drew from his religion much strength and spiritual nourishment; but he was also capable of hypocrisy, and of using the selfsame religion as a cloak for his greed and cruelty. What is the final image that remains in our minds of such a man?

To answer this question we must examine his life in three dimensions. There was its great outline of rise, zenith, and decline; there was its outward history in minute detail, and its conduct in varying circumstances; and there was the inner life of the man's soul, which was perhaps simpler than some of us think. And first, as to his life as a single thing. It rose in poverty, it reached a brief and dazzling zenith of glory, it set in clouds and darkness; the fame of it suffered a long night of eclipse, from which it was rescued and raised again to a height of glory

which unfortunately was insufficiently founded on fact; and as a reaction from this, it has been in danger of becoming entirely discredited, and the man himself denounced as a fraud. The reason for these surprising changes is that in those fifty-five years granted to Columbus for the making of his life he did not consistently listen to that inner voice which alone can hold a man on any constructive path. He listened to it at intervals, and he drew his inspiration from it; but he shut his ears when it had served him, when it had brought him what he wanted. In his moments of success he guided himself by outward things; and thus he was at one moment a seer and ready to be a martyr, and at the next moment he was an opportunist, watching to see which way the wind would blow, and ready to trim his sails in the necessary direction. Such conduct of a man's life does not make for single light or for true greatness; rather for dim, confused lights, and lofty heights obscured in cloud.

If we examine his life in detail we find this alternating principle of conduct revealed throughout it. He was by nature clever, kind-hearted, rather large-souled, affectionate, and not very honest; all the acts prompted by his nature bear the stamp of these qualities. To them his early years had probably added little except piety, sharp practice, and that uncomfortable sense, often bred amid narrow and poor surroundings, that one must keep a sharp look-out for oneself if one is to get a share of the world's good things. Something in his blood, moreover, craved for dignity and the splendour of high-sounding titles; craved for power also, and the fulfilment of an arrogant pride. All these things were in his Ligurian blood, and he breathed them in with the very air of Genoa. His mind was of the receptive rather than of the constructive kind; and it was probably through those long years spent between sea voyages and brief sojourns with his family in Genoa or Savona that he conceived that vague Idea which, as I have tried to show, formed the impulse of his life during its brief initiative period. Having once conceived this Idea of discovery—and, like all great ideas, it was in the air at the time and was bound to take shape in some human brain—he had all his native and personal qualities to bring to its support. The patience to await its course he had learned from his humble and subordinate life. The ambition to work for great rewards was in his blood and race; and to belief in himself, his curious vein of mystical piety was able to add the support of a ready belief in divine selection.

This very time of waiting and endurance of disappointment also helped to cultivate in his character two separate qualities—an endurance or ability to withstand infinite hardship and disappointment, and also a greedy pride that promised itself great rewards for whatever should be endured.

In all active matters Columbus was what we call a lucky man. It was luck that brought him to Guanahani; and throughout his life this element of good luck continually helped him. He was lucky, that is to say, in his relation with inanimate things; but in his relations with men he was almost as consistently unlucky. First of all he was probably a bad judge of men. His humble origin and his lack of education naturally made him distrustful. He trusted people whom he should have regarded with suspicion, and he was suspicious of those whom he ought to have known he could trust. If people pleased him, he elevated them with absurd rapidity to stations far beyond their power to fill, and then wondered that they sometimes turned upon him; if they committed crimes against him, he either sought to regain their favour by forgiving them, or else dogged them with a nagging, sulky resentment, and expected every one else to punish them also. He could manage men if he were in the midst of them; there was something winning as well as commanding about his actual presence, and those who were devoted to him would have served him to the death. But when he was not on the spot all his machineries and affairs went to pieces; he had no true organising ability; no sooner did he take his hand off any affair for which he was responsible than it immediately came to confusion. All these defects are to be attributed to his lack of education and knowledge of the world. Mental discipline is absolutely necessary for a man who would discipline others; and knowledge of the world is essential for one who would successfully deal with men, and distinguish those whom he can from those whom he cannot trust. Defects of this nature, which sometimes seem like flaws in the man's character, may be set down to this one disability—that he was not educated and was not by habit a man of the world.

All his sins of misgovernment, then, may be condoned on the ground that governing is a science, and that Columbus had

never learned it. What we do find, however, is that the inner light that had led him across the seas never burned clearly for him again, and was never his guide in the latter part of his life. Its radiance was quenched by the gleam of gold; for there is no doubt that Columbus was a victim of that baleful influence which has caused so much misery in this world. He was greedy of gold for himself undoubtedly; but he was still more greedy of it for Spain. It was his ambition to be the means of filling the coffers of the Spanish Sovereigns and so acquiring immense dignity and glory for himself. He believed that gold was in itself a very precious and estimable thing; he knew that Masses and candles could be bought for it, and very real spiritual privileges; and as he made blunder after blunder, and saw evil after evil heaping itself on his record in the New World, he became the more eager and frantic to acquire such a treasure of gold that it would wipe out the other evils of his administration. And once involved in that circle, there was no help for him.

The man himself was a simple man; capable, when the whole of his various qualities were directed upon one single thing, of that greatness which is the crown of simplicity. Ambition was the keynote of his life; not an unworthy keynote, by any means, if only the ambition be sound; but one serious defect of Columbus's ambition was that it was retrospective rather than perspective. He may have had, before he sailed from Palos, an ambition to be the discoverer of a New World; but I do not think he had. He believed there were islands or land to be discovered in the West if only he pushed on far enough; and he was ambitious to find them and vindicate his belief. Afterwards, when he had read a little more, and when he conceived the plan of pretending that he had all along meant to discover the Indies and a new road to the East, he acted in accordance with that pretence; he tried to make his acts appear retrospectively as though they had been prompted by a design quite different from that by which they had really been prompted. When he found that his discovery was regarded as a great scientific fact, he made haste to pretend that it had all along been meant as such, and was in fact the outcome of an elaborate scientific theory. In all this there is nothing for praise or admiration. It indicates the presence of moral disease; but fortunately it is functional rather than organic disease. He was right and sound at heart; but he spread his sails too readily to the great winds of popular favour, and the result was

instability to himself, and often danger of shipwreck to his soul.

The ultimate test of a man's character is how he behaves in certain circumstances when there is no great audience to watch him, and when there is no sovereign close at hand with bounties and rewards to offer. In a word, what matters most is a man's behaviour, not as an admiral, or a discoverer, or a viceroy, or a courtier, but as a man. In this respect Columbus's character rings true. If he was little on little occasions, he was also great on great occasions. The inner history of his fourth voyage, if we could but know it and could take all the circumstances into account, would probably reveal a degree of heroic endurance that has never been surpassed in the history of mankind. Put him as a man face to face with a difficulty, with nothing but his wits to devise with and his two hands to act with, and he is never found wanting. And that is the kind of man of whom discoverers are made. The mere mathematician may work out the facts with the greatest accuracy and prove the existence of land at a certain point; but there is great danger that he may be knocked down by a club on his first landing on the beach, and never bring home any news of his discovery. The great courtier may do well for himself and keep smooth and politic relations with kings; the great administrator may found a wonderful colony; but it is the man with the wits and the hands, and some bigness of heart to tide him over daunting passages, that wins through the first elementary risks of any great discovery. Properly considered, Columbus's fame should rest simply on the answer to the single question, "Did he discover new lands as he said he would?" That was the greatest thing he could do; and the fact that he failed to do a great many other things afterwards, failed the more conspicuously because his attempts were so conspicuous, should have no effect on our estimate of his achievement. The fame of it could no more be destroyed by himself than it can be destroyed by us.

True understanding of a man and estimate of his character can only be arrived at by methods at once more comprehensive and more subtle than those commonly employed among men. Everything that he sees, does, and suffers has its influence on the moulding of his character; and he must be considered in

relation to his physical environment no less than to his race and ancestry. Christopher Columbus spent a great part of his active life on the sea; it was sea life which inspired him with his great Idea, it was by the conquest of the sea that he realised it; it was on the sea that all his real triumphs over circumstance and his own weaker self were won. The influences at work upon a man whose life is spent on the sea are as different from those at work upon one who lives on the fields as the environment of a gannet is different from the environment of a skylark: and yet how often do we really attempt to make due allowance for this great factor and try to estimate the extent of its moulding influence?

As this narrative began with the sea, so it must return to it in the end, if the subject of it is to be at all understood. For to live within sound or sight of the sea is to be conscious of a voice or countenance that holds you in unyielding bonds. The voice, being continuous, creeps into the very pulses and becomes part of the pervading sound or silence of a man's environment; and the face, although it never regards him, holds him with its changes and occupies his mind with its everlasting riddle. Its profound inattention to man is part of its power over his imagination; for although it is so absorbed and busy, and has regard for sun and stars and a melancholy, frowning concentration upon the foot of cliffs, it is never face to face with man; he can never come within the focus of its great glancing vision. It is somewhere beyond time and space that the mighty perspective of those focal rays comes to its point; and they are so wide and eternal in their sweep that we should find their end, could we but trace them, in a condition far different from that in which our finite views and ethics have place. In the man who lives much on the sea we always find, if he be articulate, something of the dreamer and the mystic; that very condition of mind, indeed, which we have traced in Columbus, which sometimes led him to such heights, and sometimes brought him to such variance with the human code.

A face that will not look upon you can never give up its secret to you; and the face of the sea is like the face of a picture or a statue round which you may circle, looking at it from this point and from that, but whose regard is fixed on something beyond and invisible to you; or it is like the face of a person well known to you in life, a face which you often see in various

surroundings, from different angles, now unconscious, now in animated and smiling intercourse with some one else, but which never turns upon you the light of friendly knowledge and recognition; in a word, it is unconscious of you, like all elemental things. In the legend of the Creation it is written that when God saw the gathering together of the waters which He called the Seas, He saw that it was good; and He perhaps had the right to say so. But the man who uses the sea and whose life's pathway is laid on its unstable surface can hardly sum up his impressions of it so simply as to say that it is good. It is indeed to him neither good nor bad; it is utterly beyond and outside all he knows or invents of good and bad, and can never have any concern with his good or his bad. It remains the pathway and territory of powers and mysteries, thoughts and energies on a gigantic and elemental scale; and that is why the mind of man can never grapple with the unconsciousness of the sea or his eye meet its eye.

Yet it is the mariner's chief associate, whether as adversary or as ally; his attitude to things outside himself is beyond all doubt influenced by his attitude towards it; and a true comprehension of the man Columbus must include a recognition of this constant influence on him, and of whatever effect life-long association with so profound and mysterious an element may have had on his conduct in the world of men. Better than many documents as an aid to our understanding of him would be intimate association with the sea, and prolonged contemplation of that face with which he was so familiar. We can never know the heart of it, but we can at least look upon the face, turned from us though it is, upon which he looked. Cloud shadows following a shimmer of sunlit ripples; lines and runes traced on the surface of a blank calm; salt laughter of purple furrows with the foam whipping off them; tides and eddies, whirls, overfalls, ripples, breakers, seas mountains high—they are but movements and changing expressions on an eternal countenance that once held his gaze and wonder, as it will always hold the gaze and wonder of those who follow the sea.

So much of the man Christopher Columbus, who once was and no longer is; perished, to the last bone and fibre of him, off the face of the earth, and living now only by virtue of such truth as there was in him; who once manfully, according to the light that he had, bore Christ on his shoulders across

stormy seas, and found Him often, in that dim light, a heavy and troublesome burden; who dropped light and burden together on the shores of his discovery, and set going in that place of peace such a conflagration as mankind is not likely to see again for many a generation; if indeed ever again, in this much-tortured world, such ancient peace find place.

[THE END]

NOTE

ON THE NAVIGATION OF COLUMBUS'S FIRST VOYAGE

BY THE

EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P.

NOTE

ON THE NAVIGATION OF COLUMBUS'S FIRST VOYAGE

AS most unluckily the world is deprived of the privilege of perusing the original log or journal of Christopher Columbus, the account given by Las Casas of the first and most memorable voyage of that intrepid mariner is perhaps the most interesting human document in existence dealing with maritime affairs. It is to be regretted that, on account of the brilliancy of his achievement and the world-making character of the results following upon it, Columbus has been credited with almost superhuman intuitions and faculties of an extraordinary character. A sort of hero-worship has arisen which detracts from the real characteristics and nature of the man. If we read with an unprejudiced eye the plain words of the Journal, if we consider the navigational instruments at his disposal, if we realise his geographical and cosmographical ignorance, and can bring ourselves to understand how terrible in an age of ignorance and superstition must have been a voyage into the unknown, there is no necessity to draw upon the imagination in order to gild the crown which Columbus is naturally entitled to wear as a bold and skilful sailor, with a keen eye for the main chance, but also determined at all hazards to fulfil a mission which he deemed himself appointed by Providence to undertake.

To understand the nature of his task it is necessary to consider the amount and character of the information Columbus possessed, and the navigational appliances at his command. To realise the difficulties he contended with and overcame, the pages of the Journal must be perused with an open mind and much freedom in interpretation. The Journal is very inaccurate, or rather very slovenly, in details at any rate. We are not told whether civil or astronomical time is used. The courses steered and distances run are in many cases vaguely stated. Columbus is often said to have traversed such and such a distance during

the day and such another distance during the night, but no definition of day and night is given us. Such loose expressions as "soon after sunrise," or "shortly after dark," or "three o'clock at night" are not infrequent. We do not know whether any allowance was made for the change of variation which Columbus experienced on the voyage, nor can we tell what leeway his ships made, and whether allowance was or was not made for it. Some obviously clerical errors are to be found. In endeavouring, therefore, to trace the incidents of the voyage and to lay down the courses steered and distances run, and thereby to form some idea of what passed through the minds of the great discoverer and his companions, conjecture must perforce be allowed to take a prominent part.

What was the extent of Columbus's knowledge? It is difficult to say. He may have voyaged as far north as Iceland. He had possibly sailed to England and as far south as Guinea; and must have been well acquainted with the meteorological and other phenomena of the eastern seaboard of the North Atlantic. Theoretically he knew the world was more or less round, and that if it were possible to sail far enough to the west well-known regions in the east would be reached; and he had good reason to believe that land had been found far to the westward. Northmen had visited and settled in Greenland and Vinland some centuries before Columbus undertook his voyage. It is true that the colony had disappeared, but it is difficult to believe that all memory or tradition of the fact that a settlement had been made across the Northern Atlantic could have died out. We may, I think, take it for granted that Columbus had heard, either in Iceland or England, rumours sufficient to convince him that land existed across the western ocean. Then there is the story of the "unknown pilot." It is stated that a ship trading to Madeira and the Canaries was blown across the ocean to some land, probably one of the Antilles, and was brought home after a terribly long voyage; and that the master shortly before his death communicated the facts of his discovery to Columbus. The voyage out is said to have taken twenty-eight or twenty-nine days, and the voyage home more than twice as long. The distance from the western islands to Guadeloupe, the nearest of the Antilles to which a ship was likely to be blown, is about 2616 miles. If she was blown away from the coast of Spain or Portugal the distance would be about 3216 miles. In either case the distance may easily have been traversed in twenty-eight or twenty-nine days. It is an historical fact that shortly

after Columbus's first voyage a ship was blown across to the coast of Brazil and returned. It would be strange indeed if ships were not occasionally driven across the ocean by gales and a long continuance of easterly winds; and it is not strange that, under the circumstances then existing, very few should have returned. Though controversy has raged, and still rages, round this subject, the probability is in favour of the truth of the story, and it may be taken for granted that Columbus was aware that land had been discovered across the western ocean in high latitudes, and also on or about the latitude of the Canaries, or some other of the western islands.

Though Columbus was aware that the globe was spherical, he entertained most inaccurate ideas of its dimensions, and of the configuration of the continents and oceans composing it. He was all wrong in his estimate of the length of an equatorial degree. He believed that the coast of China and Japan lay only some 6500 miles west from the coast of Spain or Portugal, whereas the east coast of Japan is close upon 10,000 miles, and the east coast of China over 11,000 miles, distant from Lisbon. Columbus's conception of the size of the globe on the parallel of 29° was too small by some 4500 miles.

Columbus was a map-maker, and had doubtless studied the maps of the period, which portrayed an immense projection eastward of China and Japan, and also certain hypothetical islands lying to the east of that coast. On the whole, we may assume that he knew that land had been discovered both on a high northern parallel and somewhere about the parallel of 29°, that he believed that the great western ocean extended some 6500 miles to the west of Spain, and that certain islands—Antilia and others—would be met with on the way. That he expected to find land of some sort, probably the unknown pilot's land, about 2000 or 2500 miles west of the Canaries, is rendered probable by the fact that he appointed a position some 2100 miles west of those islands as a rendezvous for the fleet in case the ships composing it became separated during the voyage.

Columbus had the compass. The compass-card in use at that time was divided into 360 degrees and 32 points as it is at present, but the points were named differently. The cardinal and quadrantal points were named as at present, but each quadrant was divided into four spaces, each of these being called a quarter (¼) of the quadrant. Thus the point next to north to the eastward was called N. ¼ N.E. instead of N. by E. as it is now; the point next to the northward of east was called

E. ¼ N.E. instead of E. by N.; and so on. The following table shows the old and the modern method of naming the points of the compass :—

Modern	*Old*
North.	North.
N. by E.	N. ¼ N.E.
N.N.E.	N.N.E.
N.E. by N.	N.E. ¼ N.
N.E.	N.E.
N.E. by E.	N.E. ¼ E.
E.N.E.	E.N.E.
E. by N.	E. ¼ N.E.
East.	East.
E. by S.	E. ¼ S.E.
E.S.E.	E.S.E.
S.E. by E.	S.E. ¼ E.
S.E.	S.E.
S.E. by S.	S.E. ¼ S.
S.S.E.	S.S.E.
S. by E.	S. ¼ S.E.
South.	South.
S. by W.	S. ¼ S.W.
S.S.W.	S.S.W.
S.W. by S.	S.W. ¼ S.
S.W.	S.W.
S.W. by W.	S.W. ¼ W.
W.S.W.	W.S.W.
W. by S.	W. ¼ S.W.
West.	West.
W. by N.	W. ¼ N.W.
W.N.W.	W.N.W.
N.W. by W.	N.W. ¼ W.
N.W.	N.W.
N.W. by N.	N.W. ¼ N.
N.N.W.	N.N.W.
N. by W.	N. ¼ N.W.

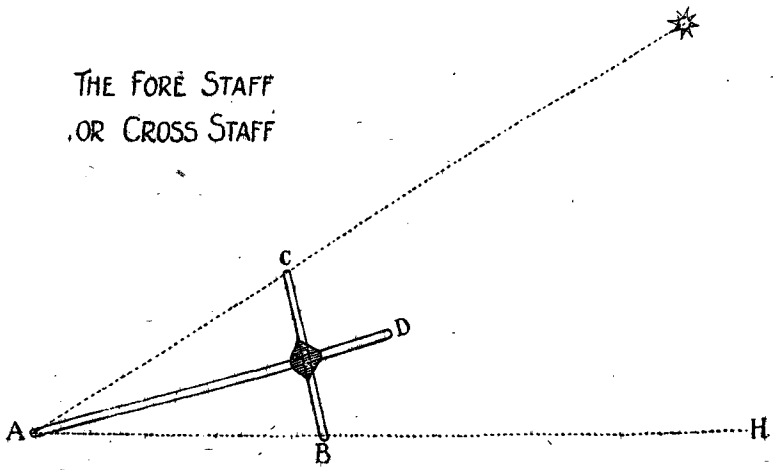
So close and competent an observer as Columbus must doubtless have been aware, even if the fact was not generally known and acted upon, that the compass needle did not point due north; for, assuming as we may do that the lines of variation and the secular changes in them are constant and regular, he must in his voyages to the south and to the north have navigated in an area subject to easterly variation ranging from about 15° to 5°. Roughly speaking, the curve of 15° passed through the western portion of England to the bight of the Gulf of Guinea. The line of 10° easterly variation passed some three or four degrees to the west of Cape Clear and Lisbon. The curve

of 5° ran from Iceland just to the west of Madeira to the Canaries and Cape Blanco on the west coast of Africa. The line of no variation passed the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, and must have been struck by Columbus on his westerly voyage in about 28° west, or some 551 miles west of the Canaries. After that he passed into westerly variation, obtaining its maximum of 11° west in about longitude 49° west, or on the course pursued by Columbus about 1688 miles west of the Canaries, and gradually diminishing to no variation in the longitude of the Bahama Islands. He had thus been accustomed to easterly variation ranging as high as 15° east, and probably sailed in westerly variation ranging as high as 11° west, making a difference altogether of 26°, or, roughly, about 2½ points.

Columbus was ill provided with nautical instruments—that is to say, the nautical instruments of the day were very imperfect. He had no log or other means of measuring the speed of his ship, and could only have done so by noting the fuss his vessel made in going through the water, by watching the speed at which she passed small stationary objects, or by walking along the deck abreast of a stationary object in the sea and thus estimating the speed of the ship by the length of time it took him to pace a known distance. But though he could thus make a pretty good guess at the speed with which he was travelling through the water, he could not have ascertained the speed at which he was travelling over the ground, for he knew nothing about currents and had no means of investigating them. He might, it is true, have discovered the existence and velocity of a surface current in smooth water by anchoring, as it were, a small boat by means of a deep-sea line and lead, but the longest line in use in those days was forty fathoms; and no mention is made in the Journal of any attempt to determine the existence, strength, and direction of currents by that or any other means. In fact he had no means of doing so, and could not possibly have known anything about ocean currents. Yet it appears evident that he somehow persuaded his crew, and not only the crew but the pilots and other navigators, that he was possessed of knowledge on the subject. He certainly gave out a false reckoning, underestimating his "Departure"—that is, his distance westward—in order that the crew should not be alarmed at the distance they were getting from home. As every man in his and in the other ships could estimate the speed of the vessels just as well as could Columbus, he was obliged to justify his false reckoning by asserting that the

currents were against him. Goodness only knows how he managed to persuade the crew to believe this. Possibly he was the only man capable of taking observations, and he may have instilled into them the belief that he could by observation correct his Dead-reckoning Departure. He most certainly could not; and as a matter of fact the currents, instead of being against him, as he asserted, were with him the whole way.

His only timekeeper was a half-hour sand-glass. For taking an observation he had the fore staff or cross staff, a quadrant, and a sea astrolabe. The fore staff or cross staff was a clumsy



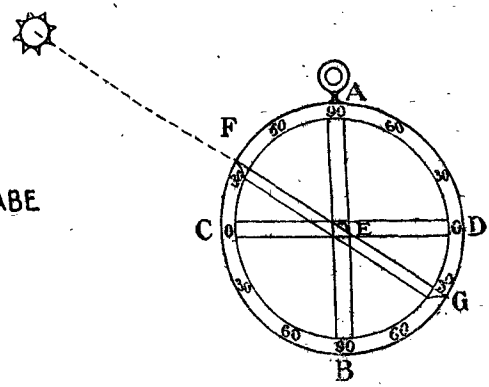
instrument, and can be best understood by a glance at the above diagram.

The degrees and minutes corresponding to the altitude were marked on the longer arm of the staff. The observer, with his eye at A, moved the arm CB to and fro upon the long arm AD until B was on the horizon and C on the sun or other heavenly body observed.

The quadrant was a copper or brass triangle, one side being an arc graduated to 90°. The other two sides met at an apex where there was a ring, and whence a plumb-line hung across the arc. Two sights were fixed on one side, and the observer held the instrument loosely by the ring. As soon as the two sights were on with the sun, the arc was read off at the point where it was intersected by the plummet-line, which gave the altitude.

The astrolabe was the instrument principally used by Columbus, and below is a diagram of it.

The sea astrolabe consisted of a brass instrument about one foot in diameter, suspended from a fixed object, or by the hand of the observer, at A, and having a weight attached by a cord to A to act as a plumb-line. It was divided into degrees from 90° at A and B to 0° at C and D. FG is a movable arm centring in E, with sight vanes at G and F. The horizontal position of CD is obtained by means of the plumb-line attached at A. The observer looking through the sight-vane at G and F gets the arm GF on with the sun or other heavenly body, and reads off the altitude at either F or G.



THE SEA ASTROLABE

Tables of the sun's declination had been calculated in Columbus's time, and he could probably calculate his latitude by meridian altitude of the sun taken with the astrolabe. But it is obvious that at sea, and especially in a small vessel, any observation must have been very unreliable when taken by an instrument in which the perpendicular and consequently the horizon line was ascertained by means of a plumb-line; indeed it is mentioned in the Journal of the homeward-bound voyage that, owing to the high sea, Columbus could not take an observation. On shore, doubtless, with the astrolabe suspended upon some fixed object, a fairly accurate altitude could have been taken.

Reference is made in the Journal on four occasions to observations for latitude. They all occur during the cruise among the islands, and may have been taken on shore or on the ship at anchor in a quiet harbour. But Columbus was cer-

tainly in the habit of taking observations at sea and at night, and therefore probably of the Pole Star, for on one occasion the crew were minded to throw him overboard some night, "publishing that he had fallen in taking the position of the star with his quadrant or astrolabe"; and it is mentioned that on another occasion the sea was too rough for him to observe the star. In all the recorded occasions on which latitude was found by observation the latitude is about doubled. Had the observations been of the sun, this curious fact might be very roughly accounted for by assuming the altitude to be recorded instead of the latitude; but as the Pole Star appears to have been observed the error is unaccountable, except on the assumption that the arc was cut to half-degrees and that half-degrees were misquoted for degrees.

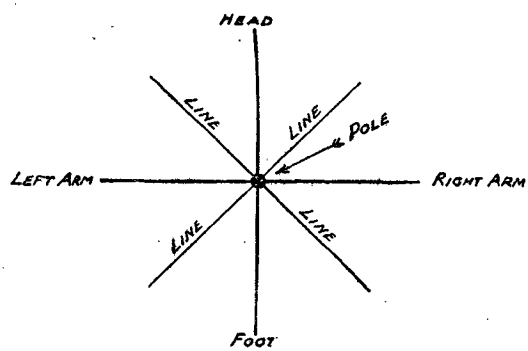
One of the simplest methods of finding latitude is from the altitude of the Pole Star. The altitude of the Pole Star is, with a suitable allowance, the altitude of the Pole, and the altitude of the Pole is of course the latitude. The only difficulty, from the modern mariner's point of view, is that with a reflecting instrument a clearly defined horizon is essential. Columbus did not use a reflecting instrument, and that objection did not therefore obtain. He could use the Pole Star at any time that it was visible, and undoubtedly the method of ascertaining latitude which he preferred was by observation of the altitude of that star. On shore, at any rate, Columbus could have observed the altitude of the Pole Star with a fair amount of accuracy, but to get anything like a decent latitude he must have known what allowance it was necessary to make for the relative positions of the star and the Pole. Polaris, or the Pole Star (Alpha Ursa Minor), which is now little more than $1\frac{1}{4}°$ off the Pole, was, at the date of the first voyage, as much as $3\frac{1}{3}°$ off the Pole. A very large error might therefore easily have been made in latitude; and we may be sure that so careful and skilful a mariner as Columbus would not have placed the reliance that he did upon observations of the Pole Star unless he had some means of correcting that error. It is difficult to say what they were.

Great importance was attached to the Little Bear, and to two stars in it called the "Guards," by navigators of those days. R. H. Allen, in "Star Names and their Meanings" (1899), p. 459, says: "$\beta\gamma$ were the Guards or Wardens of the Pole that old Thomas Hood said were 'of the Spanish word *guardare* (to beholde), because they are diligently to be looked unto,

in regard of the singular use which they have in navigation.'" Allen further says: "These stars, like the stars in Charles's Wain, were a timepiece to the common people, and even thought worthy of special treatises by navigators, as to their use in indicating the hours of the night."

In the "Safeguard of Saylers" (1619) there is a chapter on "Howe to knowe the houre of the night by the Guards by knowing on what point of the compass they shall be at midnight every fifteenth day throughout the whole yeare"; and in the "Arte of Navigation" "Englished out of the Spanyshe" by Richard Eden (1561) an account is given of an instrument for finding time by the circle described by "the two starres called the Guardians or the mouth of the horne." Tap's "Seaman's Grammar" (1609) also treats of the Guards.

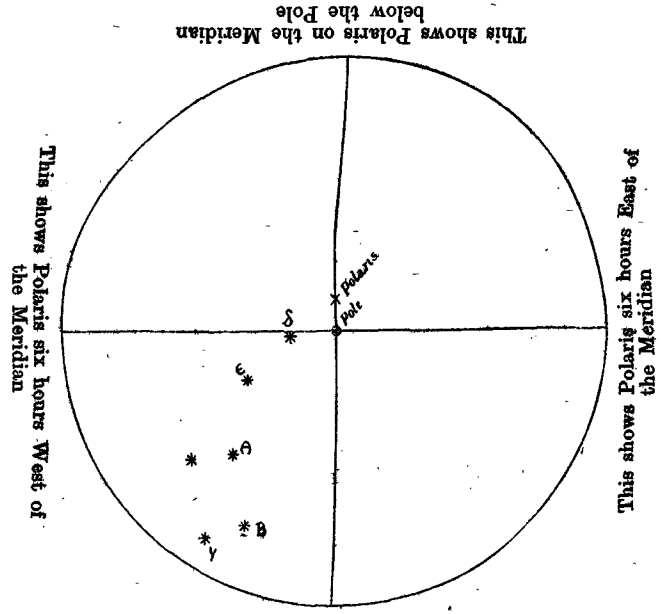
Navigators used a diagram as below:—



and undoubtedly calculated time at night by the motion of the Guards through the diagram, allowing three hours between each line. The sun was their clock by day and the Guards by night. But it was an unreliable clock, useful to roughly estimate the passage of time, useless to ascertain time at ship for navigational purposes; and navigators would not have attached such great importance to the Little Bear if it had served merely as an indicator of the passage of time by night. I am convinced they used it also to estimate the relative positions of the Pole Star and Pole, and consequently the correction to be added to or subtracted from the altitude of the star for finding the altitude of the Pole and the latitude.

The following rough diagram may possibly indicate the method used.

We may assume that the navigator possessed sufficient astronomical knowledge to judge by the position of the constellation whether Polaris was above or below the Pole. By drawing an imaginary line through the Guards γ and β, and dropping a perpendicular on to it from Polaris, he could know



This shows position of Ursa Minor when Polaris is on the Meridian above the Pole

approximately when Polaris was on the meridian above or below the Pole, and consequently would know also approximately what allowance to subtract from or to add to the observed altitude of the Pole Star. Or, if circumstances permitted of it, he might take two observations of the star on the meridian, one above and one below the Pole, and by halving the sum of the two altitudes have arrived at the altitude of the Pole. He could also roughly determine when the star was due east or west—the best position for an observation in those days, as in that case no allowance would have to be made.

Columbus had, and very naturally had, considerable trouble

with his crew. It is denied that anything like mutiny took place; but it is stated in the Journal that when steering west Columbus went below, and on coming on deck some time afterwards found the ship's head north-east. He is said to have been very angry with the helmsman, and to have abused him for careless steering. To attribute a change of course from west to north-east to careless steering, or to suppose the ship broke off from west to north-east, is of course absurd. He had been sailing to the southward of west, and if it be true that the crew put the ship's head north-east when Columbus was out of the way, it is obvious that they were steering for home, and if that is not mutiny, it is difficult to know how it can be described. But it is not credible that the course was altered to north-east; Columbus was in the north-east trades; no shift of wind is mentioned, and he had the ship's head brought back again to west. Moreover, the Journal describes him as merely reprimanding the helmsman for careless steering; it is therefore safe to assume that north-east is a clerical error, and that the helmsman had let the ship come up to the northward or fall off to the southward of west.

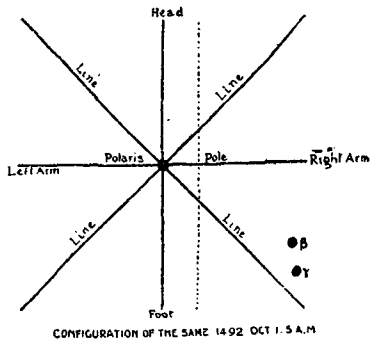
It is stated that Columbus's crew were very much alarmed when they found that the compass-needle no longer pointed to the Pole Star, and Columbus evidently became uneasy himself. It cannot, however, be accurately said that he or they were alarmed because the needle did not point to the Pole Star; for, as I have shown, they must all have been aware that in their own home waters it did not point to that star. What they did observe, and what frightened them, was that it did not point in the direction to which they had been accustomed; and as the compass was the only reliable instrument they had wherewith to navigate, it is small wonder that they were much perturbed. According to the Journal Columbus manipulated the needle so as to make it point to the Pole Star in order to allay their fears. That is most improbable. It could only have been done in one of two ways. Either he must have deflected the needle easterly by means of a magnet, or he must have taken out the compass-card on the ground that it had become ineffective in some way, and must have altered the position of the needle under it, and in fact have substituted a faked card. It is difficult to conceive how he could have carried out either of these operations without the knowledge and connivance at any rate of the navigators and pilots (mates) in his own ship, and he certainly could not have done anything of the sort in respect

of the compasses in the other two ships composing his fleet.

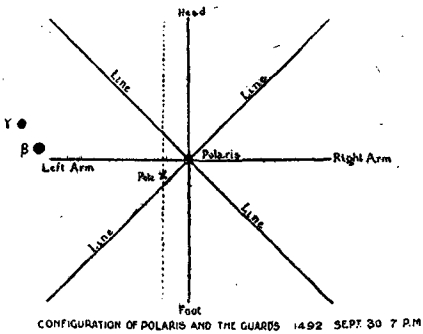
It is also stated in the Journal that the needle pointed to the west of the Pole Star at night, and was true to the Pole Star in the morning. I take leave to attribute this to an effort of the imagination on the part of the chronicler, or to an effort of imagination on the part of the crew. It must be remembered that Columbus had no instrumental means of taking an accurate azimuth, and with the compass-card swinging about, as it must do in a small ship, he may have persuaded his hands that they were mistaken in the bearings they had taken of the Pole Star. Still, my impression is, not only that the crew were alarmed at the change in variation, but that Columbus was much disturbed in his own mind also. A very peculiar passage occurs in the Journal. Under date of the 30th September it says that "the stars which are called the Guards, when night comes on, are near the arm in the west, and at dawn they are on the line below the arm to the north-east, as it appears that during all the night they do not go more than three lines, which are nine hours, *and this each night*" (the italics are mine). It is to be presumed that by the "line below the arm to the north-east" the line pointing to the south-east is meant, in which case the revolution of the stars would be stated with tolerable accuracy. The diagram opposite shows the position of the stars.

The important part of the statement is that this revolution occurred each night. Of course it must have occurred each night, and the mention of that fact would seem to prove either that Columbus thought the stars were so near that he had altered their bearings by sailing some two thousand miles west, which is most improbable, or that he was in doubt whether some extraordinary perturbation had not occurred in the constellation containing the Pole Star. The hours of darkness on the 30th of September would normally be about ten, and during that time the Guards would rotate through 150°, whereas Columbus says they rotated only through 135°. But whether we are to understand by that that he thought the phenomena of rotation were not quite normal, or whether his observation was not very accurate, or whether the night was unusually clear, it is impossible to say. Nor can we tell whether Columbus came to the conclusion that the declination of the needle was to be accounted for by some change in the position of the Pole Star; my opinion is that he realised that he had changed from easterly into westerly variation, and that such a change was

normal; but, as that fact was far too intricate a matter to explain to his crew, he persuaded them it was the Pole Star that had changed its position, and that the compass-needle still pointed to the north.



CONFIGURATION OF THE SAME 1492 OCT 1. 5 A.M



CONFIGURATION OF POLARIS AND THE GUARDS 1492 SEPT 30 7 P.M

The ideas entertained by Columbus concerning longitude must have been very hazy. As has already been mentioned, his conceptions of the length of an equatorial degree and of the dimensions of the globe were altogether inaccurate. Moreover, he had no means whatever of ascertaining by observation his differences of longitude, according to his own erroneous conception of the length of a degree on the parallel of 28 N., and he could not by observation fix this position on the spaces marked on the chart or map which he used. It is stated in Thacher's "Christopher Columbus," vol. i. p. 289, that a position west of the Canaries might be determined by observing the differences of the right ascension of stars. This is absurd, because the right ascension of a star does not vary by changing your position from east to west or *vice versa*, and the right ascension of stars varies only a few seconds in the year. Humboldt says that Columbus could, within certain limits, find the longitude of his vessel by availing himself of the declination of the magnetic needle. Longitude could not be found within very many degrees by such means; but in any case the lines of equal declination of the needle, or, as it is commonly called, of variation, were then unknown, and longitude could not be determined by means of an unknown factor.

It has been suggested he could find longitude by eclipses and various other means. That is also impossible. The dates of eclipses of the moon and some other phenomena were cal-

culated, but no mention is made of an eclipse during this voyage, although on his second voyage he took a rough observation from an eclipse. He had no instruments by which he could observe the transits of Mercury or of Jupiter's satellites. He had no tables which would have enabled him to use a lunar distance, and if he had the tables he had no instrument whereby he could have observed a lunar distance with sufficient accuracy to put them to any use. Even with our modern instruments the difficulty of getting contact between the sun or other stars with the moon is so great as to render lunars very unreliable. He had no timekeeper, and could not tell the time at Cadiz, or wherever his first meridian was. He might, it is true, by observation of a conjunction or of some other phenomenon the date of which at Cadiz or at some other known place was calculated, have ascertained the date at that place; but he had no means of finding ships' time by observation of the sun on or near the prime vertical, or by the polar angles of any of the heavenly bodies, or by any other means, with sufficient accuracy to compare ship time with Cadiz time and so find his longitude. It is certain, therefore, that he had no reliable means of ascertaining his longitude, and never attempted to do so. He navigated, as hundreds and thousands of navigators have done since, until chronometers were invented, by sailing westward on a parallel, keeping on that parallel as well as he could by dead-reckoning, and by ascertaining his latitude by observation when he got the chance, and trusting entirely to dead-reckoning for his departure—that is, his distance westward.

It may be interesting to trace by the dead-reckoning, as recorded in the Journal, where Columbus was at certain critical dates on his outward journey. His point of departure was Gomera in the Canary Islands. Columbus's league contained four Italian miles, and was equal to 3·18 of our nautical miles. Considering the very unreliable character of all the data, whether by observation or by dead-reckoning, the fractions may, I think, be omitted, though they make a difference of some 200 miles in the total run from Gomera to Watling Island. We will assume three miles to the league. The true course and distance to Watling Island in the Bahamas, which was his landfall, is S. 85½° W., 3100 miles. It is to be premised that he expected to arrive at some land, or some important position, about 2000 miles west of the Canaries, for he instructed the other ships composing the fleet to rendezvous, in case of separation, 700 leagues, or 2100 miles, west of their point of departure—Gomera.

He sailed on September the 6th. On the 13th—that is, seven days out—Columbus first observed that the compass-needle declined to the west. The other ships do not appear to have noticed this westerly variation until two or three days later. The run of the ship from the 6th to the 13th inclusive was west 672 miles. Gomera is in latitude 28° 6′ 30″ N. A course west and a departure of 672 miles would give, on the parallel of 28° N., a difference of longitude of 12° 16′. Gomera is in longitude 17° 20′ 30″ W.; and Columbus was therefore in longitude 29° 37′ W. on the 13th. He would have just passed the meridian of no variation, which lay in about 28° N. and 28° W. Columbus would need to have been a most extraordinarily close observer to have discovered westerly variation; and it would have been more correct to say that he noticed a change in the direction of the needle, and that easterly variation had ceased.

On the 19th the three ships compared notes with a view to fixing their position. The flagship made herself 1200 miles, the *Pinta* 1260 miles, and the *Niña* 1320 miles west of the Canaries. Not allowing for variation, the position by the dead-reckoning in the Journal was lat. 28° 6′ N., long. 42° 16′ W.—no difference of latitude, and departure 1315 to the west. The *Niña's* computation is about right if the run of the 19th—that is, seventy-five miles—is included. Allowing 5° W. variation, and calculating from the point of departure (Gomera), the position gave a difference of latitude of 23 miles S., and a departure of 1319 miles west. It is worthy of notice that from the 6th to the 19th Columbus steered due west by compass; that on the 19th the three ships compared their respective reckoning, with the view undoubtedly of fixing the position of the fleet, and that from the 20th to the 26th inclusive the course was frequently changed. This may of course be accounted for by shifts of wind, and such winds as made it impossible for Columbus to lay his course; but it rather looks as if, having run about 1300 miles west by compass on the parallel of 28°, Columbus deemed himself near some island, and hunted about for it for a few days. On the 25th a consultation took place between Columbus and Alonso Pinzon, and the chart was consulted. The position according to the dead-reckoning, without allowance for variation, was lat. 29° 46′ N., long. 46° 54′ W. Difference of latitude 100 miles north, departure 1565 miles west. Allowing 5° westerly variation, the position gave a difference of latitude of 50 miles N., and a departure of 1577 west. Columbus was about 535 miles to the east, and about 100 miles to the north of the

position fixed upon as a rendezvous in case of the dispersal of the fleet. There can be no doubt that Columbus and the other captains and navigators believed themselves to be near land on the 25th, and in the evening of that day Pinzon thought he saw it in the south-west and raised a great shout. That Columbus believed land had been sighted in that direction is obvious, for he sailed south-west fifty-one miles in search of it. But on the 26th he resumed his course due west for forty-eight miles. He was evidently looking about for land which he believed to be in the immediate neighbourhood. On the 27th he seems to have abandoned the search, for during the next eleven days he proceeded on his proper course due west.

Columbus doubtless came to the conclusion that he had missed the unknown pilot's island, or Antilia, or some other island then supposed to exist, and made up his mind to lose no more time in searching for it. On October 1 Columbus's pilot, Juan de la Cosa, became alarmed. He reckoned his departure at 1734 miles from Ferro in the Canaries, and apparently thought if any land existed in the direction in which they were sailing, they ought to have reached it. As a matter of fact, he had considerably underestimated his run. Since September the 25th Columbus had made a little southing and a good deal of westing. He had nearly got back to his parallel of 28° N. The position according to the dead-reckoning in the Journal, without allowing for variation, was lat. 28° 35′ N., long. 54° 58′ W. Difference of latitude 29 miles north, departure 1983 west. Allowing for variation, the difference of latitude was 68 miles S., and departure 2088 miles west. He was approaching the position of the rendezvous. From October the 1st to the 5th the course and distance, without allowance for variation, was west 693 miles. Columbus was some 2600 miles west of the Canaries. Allowing for variation, his departure was 2638 miles west. He had long passed the position of the rendezvous, and had exceeded by 500 miles the distance which at the beginning of the voyage he had assured the crew was the utmost that would have to be traversed before they made the land. Martin Alonso Pinzon evidently became uneasy, for a consultation or altercation was held with Columbus on the 5th. Pinzon thought they were too far north, and wanted to sail to the south. Columbus wished to continue his course west, and as usual Columbus had his way. From the 5th to the 11th the courses varied, doubtless owing to shifts of wind. The course by compass and distance made good during those last anxious eventful days

was S. 68½° W., 644 miles. It is not likely that during that period the Admiral had any further difficulty with Pinzon or the pilots or crews. They saw great flocks of birds flying towards the south-west; they passed a carved stick showing human workmanship, and a green limb of a tree, and the branch of a briar rose. Abundant signs that they were near land must have been evident to all. It is difficult to realise the relief that all hands must have felt, impossible to imagine the anxiety in which men steeped in ignorance and superstition must have waited for a sight of the unknown land which they knew to be near. At ten o'clock at night Columbus saw a light. At two in the morning of the 12th the *Pinta* reported land in sight, and as soon as daylight permitted, the fleet crept in and brought up on the west side of Watling Island in eight fathoms. So ended a voyage in its consequences the most eventful ever undertaken. In itself it was uneventful. They were favoured by fair winds and fair weather. The voyage occupied thirty-five days. The course and distance according to the Journal was S. 82° W., 3216 miles. The total distance made was 3319 miles, or, if allowance is made for the difference between the English and Italian league, 3533 miles, which gives an average speed of 4·2 miles per hour. If the time from September the 6th to 3 A.M. on the 9th, during which it was calm and no distances are given in the Journal, is deducted, the average speed was 4½ miles per hour, and the voyage occupied 32½ days.

Columbus is credited with making a wonderful landfall. That of course is absurd. It is impossible to say that a landfall is good, bad, or indifferent unless some definite point exists. Columbus's voyage was undertaken purely as one of discovery. If he could be said to have any objective, it was the coast of China or Japan—a tolerably broad one. He may be credited, and ought to be credited, with keeping very closely to the plan he had mapped out, namely to sail west on the parallel of his point of departure—Gomera. He sagged away to the southward a little probably owing to leeway or westerly variation, or both; but on the whole he kept surprisingly close to his parallel. Whether Columbus made any allowance for change of variation it is impossible to say. No mention is made of his having done so, and it is probable therefore that he did not. On the other hand, he was a first-rate sailor-man and navigator according to his lights. He may have arrived at the correct conclusion that he had passed from easterly into westerly variation, and may have made some allowance for the change.

Here is his dead-reckoning according to the Journal, worked out without allowing for variation :—

OUTWARDS

Courses and Distances of First Voyage, no Variation allowed

Courses	Distance	N.	S.	E.	W.
West	5982	...	...	...	2598
W. by N.	79·5	15·5	...	...	78
W. by N. ½ N.	63	18·3	...	...	60·3
W.N.W.	90	34·4	...	...	83·2
N.W.	66	46·7	...	...	46·7
W.S.W.	309	...	118·2	...	285·4
S.W.	114	...	80·6	...	80·6
		114·9	198·8		3232·2 Dep.
			114·9		
		Diff. lat.	83·9		

Lat. left	28° 06′ 30″ N.	Long. left	17° 20′ 30″ W.
Diff. lat.	1 23 54 S.	Diff. long.	60 41 00
Lat. in	26° 42′ 36″	Long. in	78° 01′ 30″
Lat. left	28 06 30		
	54° 49′ 06″		
Mid. lat.	27° 24′ 33″	Log sec.	10·051710
Dep.	3232·2	Log	3·509471
Diff. long.	3641	Log	3·561181
	60° 41′		

Position by D. R., Oct. 11th :— Long. 78° 01′ 30″ W.
Lat. 26° 42′ 36° N.

Position of Watling Island :—

Lat.	24° 5′ 30″ N.	Long.	74° 25′ 10″ W.
	26° 42′ 36″ N.		78° 1′ 30″ W.
	2° 37′ 6″		3° 36′ 20″
Diff. lat.	157	Diff. long.	216·3
		Dep.	188·9

Watling Island would bear from this position S. 51° E.; distance 251 miles.

Here is the dead-reckoning, worked with 5° westerly variation, allowed for after Columbus got within the influence of westerly variation :—

FIRST VOYAGE OUTWARDS

Courses and Distances, allowing 5° W. Variation

Courses	Distances	N.	S.	W.
W. ½ S.	2598	...	226·5	2588·0
W. ½ N.	79·5	7·7	...	79·1
W. by N.	63	12·3	...	61·8
W. by N. ½ N.	90	26·1	...	86·1
N.W. ½ W.	66	41·9	...	51·0
S.W. by W. ½ W.	309	...	145·6	272·5
S.W. ½ S.	114	...	88·1	72·3
		88·0	460·2	3210·8 Dep.
			88·0	
		Diff. lat.	372·2	

Lat. left	28° 06′ 30″ N.	Long. left	17° 20′ 30″ W
Diff. lat.	6 12 12 S.	Diff. long.	59 03 00 W
Lat. in	21° 54′ 18″ N.	Long. in	76° 23′ 30″ W.
Mid. lat.	25° 00′ 24″	Log sec.	10·042748
Dep.	3210	Log	3·506613
Diff. long.	3543	Log	3·549361

Position by D. R., Oct. 11th :—
Lat. 21° 54′ 18″ N. Long. 76° 23′ 30″ W.

Position of Watling Island :—

Lat.	24° 5′ 30″ N.	Long.	74° 25′ 10″ W.
	21 54 18		76 23 30
	2° 11′ 12″		1° 58′ 20″
Diff. lat.	131·2	Diff. long.	118·3
		Dep.	108·9

Watling Island would bear from this position N. 40° E.; distance, 171 miles.

It is not easy to say either whether he made a good landfall on his homeward voyage, for his objective is not mentioned; but, on the supposition that he wanted to get home the nearest way and was bound for the Azores, and considering the terrible weather experienced at the end of the voyage, his landfall was fairly good.

On the 16th January Columbus started for home. His point of departure seems to have been the Bay of Samana in the Island of Haiti, in latitude 19° 12′ 30″ N., longitude 69° 19′ 50″ W.

Here is his dead-reckoning on the voyage home, worked without and with allowance for variation :—

HOMEWARD VOYAGE

Courses and Distances, without any allowance for Variation

Courses	Distances	N.	S.	E.
E.N.E.	854·5	327·0	...	789·7
East	1135·5	...	...	1135·5
E. by S.	72·0	...	14·0	70·6
S.E. by E.	22·5	...	12·5	18·7
N.E.	290·5	205·5	...	205·5
N. by E.	123·0	120·6	...	24·0
N.E. by N.	124·5	103·5	...	69·1
S.E.	59·5	...	42·0	42·0
N.N.E	226·5	209·2	...	86·7
E.S.E.	15·0	...	05·7	13·9
North	34·5	34·5	...	...
S. by E.	49·5	...	48·5	09·7
E. by N.	97·5	19·0	...	95·6
S.S.E.	48·0	...	44·4	18·4
N.E. by E.	39·0	21·7	...	32·4
		1041·0	167·1	2611·8 Dep.
		167·1		
	Diff. lat.	873·9		

Lat. left	19° 12′ 30″ N.	Long. left	69° 19′ 15″ W.
Diff. lat.	14 33 54 N.	Diff. Long.	48 38 00 E.
Lat. in	33° 46′ 24″ N.	Long. in	20° 41′ 15″ W.
Mid. lat.	26° 28′ 57″	Log sec.	10·048143
Dep.	2611·8	Log	3·416939
Diff. long	2918	Log	3·465082
	48° 38′ 0″		

Lat. and Long. by D. R. :—

Lat. 33° 46′ 24″ N. Long. 20° 41′ 15″ W.

From this position Santa Maria (Azores) bore N. 48° W., distant 285 miles.

HOMEWARD VOYAGE

Courses and Distances, allowing 5° W. Variation

Courses	Distances	N.	S.	E.	W.
N.E. by E. ½ E.	854·5	402·8	...	753·7	
E. ½ N.	1135·5	98·9	...	1131·2	
E. ½ S.	72·0	...	07·1	71·7	
S. E. by E. ½ E.	22·5	...	10·6	19·9	
N.E. ½ N.	290·5	224·6	...	184·3	
N. ½ E.	123·0	122·4	...	12·1	
N.E. by N. ½ N.	124·5	109·8	...	58·6	
S.E. ½ E.	59·5	...	37·8	46·0	
N. by E. ½ E.	226·5	216·8	...	65·7	
E. by S. ½ S.	15·0	...	04·4	14·4	
N. ½ W.	34·5	34·3	...	...	03·3
S. by E. ½ E.	49·5	...	47·4	14·3	
E. by N. ½ N.	97·5	28·4	...	93·3	
S.E. by S. ½ S.	48·0	...	42·3	22·6	
N.E. ½ E.	39·0	24·7	...	30·1	
		1262·7	149·6	2517·9	03·3
		149·6		03·3	
	Diff. lat.	1113·1		2514·3 Dep.	
	Diff. lat.	18° 33′ 06″			

Lat. left	19° 12′ 30″ N.	Long. left	69° 19′ 15″ W.
Diff. lat.	18 33 06 N.	Diff. long.	47 41 00
Lat. in	37° 45′ 36″	Long. in	21° 38′ 15″ W.
Mid. lat.	28° 29′ 03″	Log. sec.	10·056036
Dep.	·2514·3	Log.	3·400468
Diff. long.	·2861	Log.	3·456504
	47° 41′		

Lat. and Long. by D. R.:—

Lat. 37° 45′ 36″ N. Long. 21° 38′ 15″ W.

From this position Santa Maria (Azores) bore S. 73° W., distant 170 miles.

The other navigators thought the land sighted was the Rock of Lisbon.

The bearing and distance of Lisbon from the position by D.R. without allowance for variation :—

Lat. (Lisbon)	38° 42′ N.	Long.	9° 8′ W.
Lat. by D. R.	33 46 N.	Long.	20 41 W.
	4° 56′		11° 33′
Diff. lat.	296	Diff. long.	693
		Dep.	563

Lisbon bore from the position by dead-reckoning, without allowing for variation, N. 62° E.; distant 636 miles.

The bearing and distance of Lisbon from position by D.R., allowing 5° W. variation :—

Lat. (Lisbon)	38° 42′ N.	Long.	9° 8′ W.
Lat. by D. R.	37 45 N.	Long.	21 38 W.
Diff. lat.	0° 57′		12° 30′
		Diff. long.	750
		Dep.	591

From this position Lisbon bore N. 84° E., distant 594 miles.

All the Masters and Pilots were considerably out in their reckonings; but Columbus proved himself to be the best navigator of them all.

It will be noticed that both on the outward and homeward voyages Columbus overestimated his distance run considerably, a fact which it is exceedingly difficult to account for, especially

in the first case, when the current was with him the whole way out. He was within the drift of the north-east trades and should have overrun his log. On the homeward voyage he experienced no effects of currents, being between the north-easterly drift and the Gulf Stream. It is constantly stated in the Journal that he found the currents were against him. That is not true; and it is obvious that he told his people that the currents were adverse, in order to justify the false reckoning he gave out to them. He probably took observations much more frequently than is recorded, and persuaded his crew that he could thereby correct his departure by dead-reckoning. As a matter of fact he could not do so, neither could he ascertain the direction and velocity of currents.

With the cruise among the islands, the search for the mainland, and the subsequent voyages of Columbus, it is not within my province to deal. No particular navigational interest attaches to the cruise among the islands, and the other voyages are noteworthy chiefly as evidence of the skill with which mariners of those days, ill provided as they were with instrumental appliances and possessing but little geographical, astronomical, or meteorological knowledge, navigated their queer little ships across the wide expanse of the western ocean. Acting on the experience gained during the first voyage, Columbus adopted a more southerly course on his second venture, doubtless to avoid the Sargasso Sea. His powers of observation and of making correct deductions from what he observed were wonderful. Those are the qualities, combined with his confidence in himself and in his mission, that distinguish him as a master mariner among all his fellows. It would be most unfair upon him to attribute to chance the fact that he availed himself of the north-east trades on his way out and of the westerly winds prevailing farther north on his way home. During his voyages to the north he must have noticed the prevalence of westerly winds in northern latitudes. He must have also known of the north-east trades, for they are frequently picked up in longitudes in which he was accustomed to sail. His course lay well within their influence during the months of September and October, and he may have gathered from the "unknown pilot" that they prevailed right across the ocean. He observed facts and acted upon them. What he could not have known, and must have been delighted to find, is that, in winter, the prevailing winds on the western side of the Atlantic are east or to the southward of east or south-westerly out of the Gulf

of Florida, and would enable him to lay a northerly course until he got well within the belt of westerly winds. Be that as it may, he certainly adopted the best possible course outward bound by sailing south to the Canaries till he got into the region of the north-east trades, and then, under their influence, sailing west on a parallel. On his homeward voyage he was equally wise in making sufficient northing to get well within the influence of prevailing westerly winds. Moreover, his cosmographical and meteorological knowledge may have been sufficient to make him understand that the northerly course was the direct route from Palos to the Bahamas, and that he could follow it on his way home, but could not do so on his way out on account of the prevalence of westerly winds.

It is at any rate a fact that a sailing ship voyaging to-day from Palos to the Bahamas and back, with all our geographical, meteorological, astronomical, and navigational knowledge at her disposal, could not follow a better course out and home than that adopted by Columbus more than four hundred years ago.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE DATE OF COLUMBUS'S BIRTH ESTABLISHED

THERE is no subject in connection with Columbus which has excited so much controversy as the date of his birth. Las Casas and his son Ferdinand say nothing about it; while the Admiral himself, although he never says at any given date "I am such and such an age," does make several allusions to his age at different periods of his past life; which, when they are collected and examined together, contradict each other so completely that they result in nothing at all. It seems as though there were a conspiracy of silence on the part of his contemporaries; and it is more than likely that for some purpose of his own he wished the date of his birth not to be known, partly because he did not wish his humble origin to be traced. Columbus on eight separate occasions thus makes mention of certain periods during which he was engaged upon one thing or another; and these statements all contradict one another.

The dates assigned to his birth by various historians range between the years 1430 and 1456—a difference of twenty-six years. Navarrete gives the date as 1430, but his evidence for it rests on a passage in the life of Ramusio's "Peter Martyr" which cannot be allowed the necessary historical weight in contradiction to the mass of evidence that lies against it. The two other most popular dates hitherto have been 1436 and 1446. The date 1436, which has been adopted by no less than eighteen authorities, including Prescott, Humboldt, Hoeffer, and Irving, is based on the statement or Bernaldez, with whom Columbus lived for some time, that the Admiral was about seventy years old when he died. The chief objections against it are that Columbus's mother would in that case have had to be fifty-five years of age when her youngest child was born; and also that in the year 1470 it would make the Admiral thirty-four years of age; whereas there is an authentic legal document of that year in which Columbus is described as having completed nineteen years.

The next most popular date among scholars has been somewhere between 1446 and 1447, the date adopted after much research by Henry Harrisse, the chief of the modern historians of Columbus. This date is arrived at by regarding certain of Columbus's own statements as true and others as untrue. In a letter written in 1501 Columbus says that he was quite young when he went to sea, and he had continued his seafaring life up to the date of writing his letter, and that he had navigated for forty years. In another place he says that he first went to sea at the age of fourteen. If, therefore, in the year 1501 he had been at sea for forty years, and if he was fourteen years old when he went to sea, he must have been fifty-four years old in the year of writing. This date is arrived at also in another way. In Columbus's Journal for the 25th of December 1492 he says that he has been at sea for twenty-three years without interruption. In another place he says that the negotiations in Spain occupied eight years; in another that nine years had been spent in making discoveries. Twenty-three and eight and nine years added together make forty years, which, added to the fourteen years spent in Genoa before he went to sea, would again make him fifty-four years old in the year 1500. The first objection to this date is that the calculation is merely based on Columbus's own statements, which were notoriously inexact, and that other statements of his could be found to contradict this one. The next objection is that if he was born in 1446 his father and mother must have had their five children through a period of twenty-four years, as Columbus's younger brother was born in 1468, and his sister Bianchinetta was born later still.

The other dates are all based on some combination of the various puzzling statements made by Columbus as to the way in which his life was divided, and none of them now merits serious mention (although many of them have been the subject of extensive monographs) except the date 1451, which was first put forward by Mr Richard Davy in an article in the *National Review* for October 1892, and was ably established by Señor de la Rosa in his paper read before the International Congress of Americanists held in Paris in September 1900; and was in 1903 the subject of a very able monograph by M. Henry Vignaud, in which a critical study was made of the various dates assigned to the birth of Columbus, and 1451 announced as the true date. The evidence for this date rested on notarial documents recently discovered in Genoa. In one document, dated October 31, 1470, it is expressly stated that Christopher Columbus had reached the full age of nineteen years—*major annis decemnovem.* This was interpreted by M. Harrisse as meaning that Columbus was more than nineteen years of age and less than twenty-five, as the statutes of Genoa at this time recognised several ages as constituting a majority for different purposes. Unfortunately for this argument, however, although the ages of sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and twenty-five were all recognised as constituting majorities for different purposes, the age of nineteen was not. There can, according to M. Vignaud's argument, be no reason for mentioning the age of nineteen in this document except that it was the actual age of Columbus. The legal majority necessary for the act he was then performing was (as he was accompanied by his father) sixteen; all that the notary had to record was that he was a major, and he added for purposes of description and identification that he was a major of nineteen years.

Taking this document, therefore, as evidence in its simplest and most natural reading, and assuming that Columbus was nineteen years of age in October 1470, it follows that he was born in 1451. It then becomes interesting to see how far this can be reconciled with Columbus's own statements and the known facts of his life. Knowing what we do of the birth-dates of other members of his family, this date would make a difference of twenty years between the birth of Domenico's eldest and youngest children—a sufficiently wide interval; any attempt to fix the date of his birth earlier than this increases the interval to an impossible extent, as it is very unusual for a woman to bear children through a period of much longer than twenty years. In a letter of the 7th of July 1503 Columbus says that he first offered his services when he was twenty-eight years old. We know that he arrived in Portugal in 1476, and that it was about 1479 that he began in earnest to think and speak about discovery—which would make him twenty-eight years old at that time. The authenticity of the date 1451 may be regarded as finally established by the recent discovery of another Genoese document dated August 25, 1479, and first published in the *Giornale storico e litterario della Liguria* for January 1904, in which Columbus is referred to as being at that time about twenty-seven years old. The other very elaborate arguments by which this date is arrived at are to be found in the "Real Birth-Date of Columbus: A Critical Study of the various Dates assigned to the Birth of Christopher Columbus; The Real Date 1451: With a Bibliography of the Question. By Henry Vignaud. London: Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, 1903."

Other important works bearing on the subject are:—

HARRISSE, HENRY, "Christophe Colomb." Paris, 1884, Vol. i. pp. 223-241.

SANGUINETTI, L'ABBÉ, "Anno della nascita di Christoforo Colombo." Genoa, 1891.

DE LA ROSA, G., "La solution de tous les problèmes relatifs à Christophe Colomb," etc. Paris, 1902.

RUGE, DR SOPHUS, "Columbus." Berlin, 1902.

ASSERTO, UGO, "La data della nascita di Colombo accertata da un documento nuevo" (*Giornale storico e litterario della Liguria*, Jan.-Feb. 1904).

APPENDIX B

THE TOSCANELLI LETTER

IN or about the year 1547 Bartolomé de las Casas, writing a biography of Columbus from the papers of the Admiral placed in his hands by Ferdinand Columbus, writes :—

" The said Master Paul, having received the letters from Columbus, replied in a letter written in Latin, incorporating therein the letter he had written to Hernando Martinez, canon, which letter I saw and had in my hands, it being translated from Latin into Romance (Spanish)."

Briefly put, the story of the Toscanelli letter is this :—

This Latin text of a letter from Paolo Toscanelli, long sought for, was supposed to have been discovered, in 1858 or 1871—no matter which, here—written in the Admiral's own handwriting on one of the blank pages of the 1477 edition of the " Historia Rerum ubique Gestarum " of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II.). Columbus is supposed to have entrusted his own letter to a Lorenzo Birardi or Girardi, a Florentine engaged in mercantile pursuits in Lisbon. If indeed he was the messenger between Columbus and Toscanelli, he seems to have confined himself strictly to the discharge of his single task ; for in the reply Toscanelli seems to believe Columbus to be a Portuguese.

No trace of the Columbus letter to Paolo Toscanelli was found among Toscanelli's papers ; nor indeed any trace of his answer to Columbus, although, at the request of Duke Hercules d'Este, a search was made within twelve years of Toscanelli's death.

Nor have we any mention of the means by which the reply was sent to Columbus, although the name of the man who carried the letters from Columbus is preserved. A diligent search has failed to reveal the authentic presence in Lisbon of any such person as Hernando Martinez, familiar of the King of Portugal. This may prove an interesting point, as, if the Toscanelli letter is a forgery, the added weight and evidence of the letter to Martinez must have been incorporated in it at some time and place where there could be no question of producing Martinez to testify to its authenticity.

The Latin text of the letter, which should be a copy of the only real authentic text, is faulty and unscholarly. Two possible explanations of this have been put forward :—

(*a*) That Columbus may have entered the letter in his book from memory, guided in his use of Latin by the scanty light of his own classical acquirements.

(*b*) That Toscanelli may have used an amanuensis or scribe, who played havoc with his prose.

But there is no reason to suppose that he used the scribe on this only occasion, or that the scribe should have been allowed to send forth a document defaced, especially such a document as this ; no merely friendly letter, but a letter of approval and encouragement from one of the greatest men of his own time to one who had put forth such a plan as must have seemed magnificent and startling even to a great geographer.

Beyond the usual eulogistic words of address, the whole tone of the letter is one of preoccupied acceptance of Columbus's scheme. We have ample proof of the fact that it was considered in learned circles a very wild scheme, if a magnificent one : but the writer of the Toscanelli letter could not have been less surprised had he lived with this prospect by him all his life. The ordinary

supposed obstacles are not mentioned, the dangers and uncertainties are not discussed: in spite of the accepted geographical conceptions of his time, the writer goes back to a writer of the first century and puts forward his assertions as true, although these very assertions were not true, and had been discussed and disposed of by Ptolemy.

Of this more will be said presently.

Apart from the fact that no likely Martinez, canon and courtier, can be found, there are many arguments to be put forward against any letter having been asked for from Toscanelli by anybody connected with the Portuguese Court, at the time mentioned as the date of the letter, namely, 1474.

1. Between 1474 and 1479 Portugal was engaged in war with Spain; and Alphonso V. had no leisure to form or foster schemes for voyages of discovery.

2. The Treaty in 1479 ended the war. In this Treaty of Alcaçores the fields for new discoveries reserved by Spain and Portugal are clearly defined. There is no sign of any intention on the part of Alphonso to claim for himself lands or land discovered to the westward. Had he had any such schemes he would not have failed to include some reservation thereon in his Treaty, especially if we consider that legends had always been current on the existence of mythical countries in the midst of the Atlantic.

3. Apart from the reproach already made on the ground of its unscholarly Latin, the Toscanelli letter is also fantastic and inexact. The information given on the lands about to be discovered, which are identified in the writer's mind with the extreme East (China), is given in evident ignorance of the later internal changes of China; based, in fact, on the fantastic tale recounted by Marco Polo to a Pisan traveller, Rusticiano, and by him published, under the title of *Il Milione*, at the end of the thirteenth century. Had Toscanelli wished he could have gathered information by hearsay from travellers lately returned from China, or read several descriptions of the lands they had visited. Two at least had experience wide enough to command respect. These are Bartolommeo Fiorentino, returned in 1424 after twenty-four years, and Niccolò di Conti, returned in 1439 after forty years in the East.

The scientific support afforded by the Toscanelli letter to the schemes of Columbus is strangely unsound. It is drawn from the "Imago Mundi" of Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly, and from Marinus of Tyre, whose works have perished in the originals, but whose theories are known to us by the fact that Ptolemy discussed them at length and refused them. Toscanelli could have had easy access to the extant Greek texts of Ptolemy, or even seen, *in MS.*, the translation of Jacopo Angelo, which was done in 1409 or 1410, although not published till 1475, at Vicenza. Had he borrowed for once from Marinus of Tyre he would not, however, have failed to comment in some way on the fact that Ptolemy shows the calculations of Marinus of Tyre to be erroneous.

And here a consideration by the way is not entirely out of place, if we are to try and establish the probable date of authorship of these famous letters. The translation of Ptolemy was first printed in 1475. The MS. existed but was not accessible to Columbus. The "Imago Mundi" was printed between 1480 and 1490. Columbus only came across these two books late in his career, as it is reasonable to suppose that only late in his career did he become possessed of the greater part of any scholarship he could boast of. From these three sources, Ptolemy, the "Imago Mundi," and the "Milione" of Marco Polo, all the information contained in the Toscanelli letters is drawn. Columbus is known to have possessed a copy of the "Imago Mundi," a copy of the Ptolemy, and a copy of the Marco Polo. He annotated these books freely, and literally covered their margins with notes, the reading of which reveals that it was there he had found his geographical system. Among these notes there seems to have been no note made of the fact that Toscanelli had already imparted this knowledge to him.

The perusal of these books and presumably the annotations belong to the period in which Columbus was called to endure those heart-breaking cross-

examinations from learned assemblies, when he must have felt bitterly his lack of that book-learning which would have constituted in itself a claim to brotherhood with his learned judges, and the lack of which proved over and over again to be his chief and most insuperable misfortune—discrediting all his arguments at first sight, and branding him an adventurer in effect and in intention.

If the Sovereigns of Spain had placed any reasonable degree of confidence in the scheme of Columbus, if they had thought that at best his expedition could prove to be more than a raid on a far-off land, or dreamed that his first incursion could open the way to a conquest by Spain of the lands he hoped to reach, they would have found means to convince him that the terms he demanded were preposterous. If the promises of the Toscanelli letter alone had been taken seriously, Columbus would have possessed at once wealth far in excess of the wealth of any single Sovereign in the Old World. This very unreasonable disproportion between his claims and his position as a *subject* of the Crown, however exalted, was the very source of all the litigations and bitterness that followed. The jealousy against him, of which so much has been heard, was no doubt not against his *rank*, but against the power which was fast flowing into his hands, and which would have ended in giving his descendants power to wrest from the Crown of Spain these very colonies on which Columbus had planted the flag of Spain, and had taken *in her name*. From some such feeling as this the antagonism to him must have sprung—a mistrust of his alien blood, which constituted him an hereditary enemy to the country to which he owed his greatness; a fear of the actual power which was his to wield. Otherwise his titles and his glory would not have roused very strong feelings among the grandees of Spain, who thought themselves under any circumstances infinitely better men than he, and no doubt admitted no rivalry beyond that established by the laws of etiquette. Their feelings need not be supposed to have differed greatly from the feelings of the English House of Lords in our own day towards a man of humble origin who is raised to the peerage for other than political reasons.

Concerning the possible authorship of the Toscanelli letter, one more consideration occurs to me here. The documents from which Las Casas drew his information were deposited by Columbus at the convent of Las Cuevas near Seville, and were jealously guarded by these religious till the year 1609, when they passed into the hands of Nuno de Portugal, heir to the estates of Columbus. These monks were also the guardians of the papers of Bartholomew Columbus, *who withdrew his papers in* 1509. I mention this here in deference to the fact that M. Vignaud suggests Bartholomew as the possible forger of the famous letter.

To sum up finally; the real points are these :—

(*a*) No trace of Toscanelli having received any letter from Martinez to be found among his papers.
(*b*) No trace of any reply sent from him to Martinez.
(*c*) No trace of Toscanelli having received any letter from Columbus.
(*d*) No trace of any reply of his to Columbus.
(*e*) The original letter from Toscanelli to Martinez cannot be found in any archives.
(*f*) The personality of Martinez is a mysterious one, and there is no record of his existence, although he was supposed to have been a canon at Lisbon, and to have held an office at Court.
(*g*) No trace exists of the original of the letter from Toscanelli to Columbus.
(*h*) Columbus never mentioned this letter.
(*i*) The letter contains matter unscientific and out of date. This matter is contained entirely in three books constantly read and annotated by Columbus.

(*j*) The scientific statements contained in the letter are at variance with the ideas generally accepted by men of science in Toscanelli's days and held by Toscanelli himself.

(*k*) The description of the countries of the West is out of date; and is in accordance with a tale written in the thirteenth century by Marco Polo. Columbus had no ready means of correcting the tale of Marco Polo, but Toscanelli on the other hand must have been acquainted with the descriptions of recent travellers returned from China.

As for Las Casas, the paragraph which I have quoted contains so many direct assertions that it can only be taken as evidence of a sincere misconception. It is not deliberate lying, on the face of it. Poor Las Casas was taken in, no doubt, by the guard-leaf copy, just as the new inventor of it was, in 1858, or 1871—no matter here which. He said he had seen it, and had it in his own hands. So he thought most certainly. The spirit of truth breathes in his words, although they are not literally correct. He had seen a letter from Paulus, Physicus, to Columbus, in Latin—all that is true. He could not produce it or reproduce it, for what he had seen was in the Admiral's own handwriting. He thought no doubt that he would come across the original, in time.

As to the authorship, it would be much more reasonable to suppose that Lorenzo Girardi played a practical joke on Columbus, and wrote the reply to a letter which he did or did not deliver, than to ascribe it to Toscanelli. But then Columbus would hardly have failed to be struck by the fact that Toscanelli read the selfsame three books that he did, and that the limits of his knowledge coincided so strangely with his own! The most reasonable explanation of the forgery seems to be the one suggested on pp. 81-82, although it is entirely unsupported by any historical evidence.

APPENDIX C

CAPITULATION OF APRIL 17, 1492

Translation

THE things supplicated which your Highnesses give and declare to Christopher Columbus in some satisfaction for what he is to discover in the oceans, and for the voyage which now, with the aid of God, he is about to make therein in the service of your Highnesses, are as follows :—

First, that your Highnesses as Lords that are of the said oceans make from this time the said Don Christopher Columbus your Admiral in all those islands and mainlands which by his hand and industry shall be discovered or acquired in the said oceans during his life, and after his death his heirs and successors, from one to another perpetually, with all the pre-eminences and prerogatives belonging to the said office and according as Don Alonso Enriques, your High Admiral of Castile, and the other predecessors in the said office held it in their districts.—It so pleases their Highnesses. John de Coloma.

Likewise, that your Highnesses make the said Don Christopher your Viceroy and Governor General in all the said islands and mainlands and islands which, as has been said, he may discover or acquire in the said seas ; and that for the government of each one and of any one of them, he may make selection of three persons for each office, and that your Highnesses may choose and select the one who shall be most serviceable to you, and thus the lands which our Lord shall permit him to discover and acquire will be better governed in the service of your Highnesses.—It so pleases their Highnesses. John de Coloma.

Item, that all and whatever merchandise, whether it be pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, spices, and other things whatsoever, and merchandise of whatever kind, name, and manner it may be, which may be bought, bartered, discovered, acquired, or obtained within the limits of the said Admiralty, your Highnesses grant henceforth to the said Don Christopher, and will that he may have and take for himself the tenth part of all of them, deducting all the expenses which may be incurred therein ; so that of what shall remain free and clear he may have and take the tenth part for himself and do with it as he wills, the other nine parts remaining for your Highnesses.—It so pleases their Highnesses. John de Coloma.

Likewise, that if on account of the merchandise that he might bring from the said islands and lands which as aforesaid he shall acquire and discover, or of that which may be taken in exchange for the same from other merchants here, any suit should arise in the place where the said trade and traffic shall be held and conducted ; and if by the pre-eminence of his office of Admiral it may belong to him to know of such suit, it may please your Highnesses that he or his deputy, and no other judge, may take cognisance of the said suit, and thus it is decreed henceforth.—It so pleases their Highnesses if it belongs to the said office of Admiral, as the said Admiral Don Alonso Enriques held it and the others, his predecessors in their districts, and if it be just. John de Coloma.

Item, that in all the vessels which may be equipped for the said traffic and negotiation each time and whenever and as often as they may be equipped, the said Admiral Don Christopher Columbus may, if he wishes, contribute and pay the eighth part of all that may be expended in the equipment. And also that he may have and take of the profit, the eighth part of all which may result from such equipment.—It so pleases their Highnesses. John de Coloma.

These are executed and despatched with the responses of your Highnesses at the end of each article in the town of Santa Fé de la Vega de Granada, on the seventeenth day of April in the year of the Nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ one thousand four hundred and ninety-two. I, the King. I, the Queen. By the order of the King and of the Queen. John de Coloma. Registered, Calçena.

CAPITULATION OF APRIL 30, 1492

IN THE NAME of the Holy Trinity and Eternal Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons really distinct and one divine essence which lives and reigns for ever without end, and of the blessed and glorious Virgin, Saint Mary, our Lady, his Mother, whom we regard as sovereign and advocate in all our actions, and to her honour and worship, and of the blessed Apostle Saint James, light and mirror of the Spains, patron and guide of the Kings of Castile and Leon, and likewise to the honour and worship of all the other saints of the celestial court. Now though according to nature man cannot know perfectly what God is, however great His knowledge of the world may be, yet he can know Him by seeing and contemplating His wonders and the works and acts which He has done and does every day, since all works are done by His power, governed by His wisdom, and maintained by His goodness; and thus man can understand that God is the beginning, middle, and end of all things, and that in Him they are comprehended; and He maintains each one in that state which He has ordained for them, and all have need of Him and He has no need of them, and He is able to change them whenever He may choose, according to His will; and it is not in His nature to change or alter in any manner; and He is called King over all Kings, because from Him they derive their name and by Him they reign, and He governs and maintains them, and they are His vicegerents, each one in His kingdom, placed by Him over the nations to maintain them in justice and in truth, temporally; which is shown completely in two ways, one being spiritual, as the prophets and saints have shown, to whom our Lord gave grace to have accurate knowledge of things and to cause them to be understood; the other is according to nature, as philosophers have shown, who were discerners of things naturally. For the saints said that the King is set upon earth in the place of God to fulfil justice and to give to each one his due, and therefore they called him the heart and soul of the people; and just as the soul is in the heart of man, and by it the body lives and is maintained, so in the King resides justice, which is the life and support of the people of his dominions; and just as there is but one heart and by it all the members are united to form one body, even so all the members of the kingdom, however many they may be, are one, because the King must be, and is, one, and therefore they must be all one with him to follow him and to help in the things which he has to do; and according to nature the philosophers said that kings are the head of the kingdom, for as from the head proceed the perceptions by which all the members of the body are directed, even so by the mandate which proceeds from the King, who is Lord and head of all the members of the kingdom, they must be governed and directed and must pay obedience thereto; and so great is the authority of the power of kings, that all laws and rights are subject to their power, for they do not derive it from men, but from God, whose place they occupy in matters temporal; to whom among other things it chiefly appertains to love, honour, and protect his people, and among others he must especially select and honour those who deserve it on account of the services they have rendered to him; and therefore, the king or prince, among his other powers, not only can but ought to bestow favours upon those who are deserving thereof for the services they have rendered to him and for the goodness he may find in them. And because among the other virtues appertaining to kings, according to the saying of the

philosophers, justice is one, and is the virtue and truth of things, and by it the world is best and most righteously maintained, and it is, as it were, a fountain from which all rights flow, and it always exists in the dispositions of just men, never failing, and giving and distributing to each his due; and it comprehends in itself all the principal virtues, and very great utility arises therefrom, for it causes every one to live prudently and peaceably according to his condition, without fault and without error; and thereby the good become better, receiving rewards for the good deeds they have done, and the others are reformed and amended. And this justice consists of two principal parts, the one commutative, which is between one man and another; the other distributive, in which are obtained the rewards and remunerations of the good and virtuous labours and services which good men do for kings and princes and for the public welfare of their kingdoms. And since, as the laws declare, to give rewards to those who serve well and faithfully is a thing which is very becoming to all men, but especially to kings, princes, and great lords, who have the power to do it, and it is their peculiar privilege to honour and exalt those who serve them well and faithfully, and whose virtues and services deserve it; and in rewarding good deeds the kings who do so show that they are discerners of virtue and likewise administrators of justice, for justice does not consist only in the exemplary punishment of evil-doers, but also in rewarding the good. And moreover another great utility arises therefrom, for it incites the good to become more virtuous and the wicked to amend themselves, and when this course is not pursued the contrary might happen. And since among the other rewards and remunerations which kings can bestow upon those who serve them well and faithfully they can honour and elevate them among the others of their family, and ennoble, decorate, and honour them, and confer many other benefits, graces, and favours upon them: Therefore, considering and taking into account all that is aforesaid, we desire that by this our patent of privilege, or by the transcript thereof signed by a public scrivener, all who now are and shall be from henceforth may know that we Don Ferdinand and Donna Isabella, by the grace of God King and Queen of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily, Granada, Toledo, Valencia, Galicia, Majorça, Seville, Sardinia, Corsica, Murcia, Jaen, Algarbe, Algeciras, Gibraltar, and the Canary Islands; Count and Countess of Barcelona; Lords of Biscay and Molina; Dukes of Athens and Neopatria; Counts of Roussillon and Cerdagne, Marquises of Oristano and Goziano, have seen a patent of grace, signed with our names and sealed with our seal, made in this manner: Don Ferdinand and Donna Isabella, by the grace of God King and Queen of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily, Granada, Toledo, Valencia, Galicia, Majorca, Seville, Sardinia, Cordova, Corsica, Murcia, Jaen, Algarbe, Algeciras, Gibraltar, and the Canary Islands; Count and Countess of Barcelona; Lords of Biscay and Molina; Dukes of Athens and Neopatria; Counts of Roussillon and Cerdagne, Marquises of Oristano and Goziano; Forasmuch as you, Christopher Columbus, are going by our command, with some of our ships and with our subjects, to discover and acquire certain islands and mainland in the ocean, and it is hoped that, by the help of God, some of the said islands and mainland in the said ocean will be discovered and acquired by your pains and industry; and therefore it is a just and reasonable thing that since you incur the said danger for our service you should be rewarded for it, and as we desire to honour and favour you on account of what is aforesaid, it is our will and pleasure that you, the said Christopher Columbus, after you have discovered and acquired the said islands and mainland in the said ocean, or any of them whatsoever, shall be our Admiral of the said islands and mainland which you may thus discover and acquire, and shall be our Admiral and Viceroy and Governor therein, and shall be empowered from that time forward to call and entitle yourself Don Christopher Columbus, and that your sons and successors in the said office and charge may likewise entitle and call themselves Don, and Admiral and Viceroy and Governor thereof; and that you may have power to use and exercise the said office of Admiral, together with the said

office of Viceroy and Governor of the said islands and mainland which you may thus discover and acquire, by yourself or by your lieutenants, and to hear and determine all the suits and causes civil and criminal appertaining to the said office of Admiralty, Viceroy, and Governor according as you shall find by law, and as the Admirals of our kingdoms are accustomed to use and exercise it; and may have power to punish and chastise delinquents, and exercise the said offices of Admiralty, Viceroy, and Governor, you and your said lieutenants, in all that concerns and appertains to the said offices and to each of them; and that you shall have and levy the fees and salaries annexed, belonging and appertaining to the said offices and to each of them, according as our High Admiral in the Admiralty of our kingdom levies and is accustomed to levy them. And by this our patent, or by the transcript thereof signed by a public scrivener, we command Prince Don Juan, our very dear and well-beloved son, and the Infantes, dukes, prelates, marquises, counts, masters of orders, priors, commanders and members of our Council, and auditors of our chamber, alcaldes, and other justices whomsoever of our household, court, and chancery, and sub-commanders, governors of castles and fortified and unfortified houses, and all councillors, assistants, governors, alcaldes, bailiffs, judges, veinticuatros, jurats, knights, esquires, officers, and liege men of all the cities, towns, and places of our kingdoms and dominions, and of those which you may conquer and acquire, and the captains, masters, mates, officers, mariners, and seaman, our natural subjects who now are or hereafter shall be, and each and any of them, that upon the said islands and mainland in the said ocean being discovered and acquired by you, and the oath and formality requisite in such case having been made and done by you or by him who may have your procuration, they shall have and hold you from henceforth for the whole of your life, and your son and successor after you, and successor after successor for ever and ever, as our Admiral of the said ocean, and as Viceroy and Governor of the said islands and mainland, which you, the said Don Christopher Columbus, may discover and acquire; and they shall treat with you, and with your said lieutenants whom you may place in the said offices of Admiral, Viceroy, and Governor, about everything appertaining thereto, and shall pay and cause to be paid to you the salary, dues and other things annexed and appertaining to the said offices, and shall observe and cause to be observed towards you all the honours, graces, favours, liberties, pre-eminences, prerogatives, exemptions, immunities, and all other things, and each of them, which in virtue of the said offices of Admiral, Viceroy, and Governor you shall be entitled to have and enjoy, and which ought to be observed towards you in every respect fully and completely so that nothing may be diminished therefrom; and that neither therein nor in any part thereof shall they place or consent to place hindrance or obstacle against you; for we by this our patent from now henceforth grant to you the said offices of Admiralty, Viceroy, and Governor, by right of inheritance for ever and ever, and we give you actual and prospective possession thereof, and of each of them, and power and authority to use and exercise it, and to collect the dues and salaries annexed and appertaining to them and to each of them, according to what is aforesaid. Concerning all that is aforesaid, if it should be necessary and you should require it of them, we command our chancellor and notaries and the other officers who are at the board of our seals to give, deliver, pass, and seal for you our patent of privileges with the circle of signatures, in the strongest, firmest, and most sufficient manner that you may request and may find needful, and neither one nor the other of you or them shall do contrary hereto in any manner, under penalty of our displeasure and of ten thousand maravedis to our chamber, upon every one who shall do to the contrary. And further we command the man who shall show them this our patent, to cite them to appear before us in our court, wheresoever we may be, within fifteen days from the day of citation, under the said penalty, under which we command every public scrivener who may be summoned for this purpose, to give to the person who shall show it to him a

certificate thereof signed with his signature, whereby we may know in what manner our command is executed. Given in our city of Granada, on the thirtieth day of the month of April, in the year of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand four hundred and ninety-two. I the King. I the Queen. I, John de Coloma, Secretary of the King and of the Queen, our Lords, caused this to be written by their command. Granted in form, Roderick, Doctor. Registered, Sebastian Dolano. Francis de Madrid. Chancellor.

APPENDIX D

THE SIGNATURE OF COLUMBUS

IT was the habit of Columbus on receiving his appointment as Admiral of the Indies and always afterwards to sign himself "el Almirante"—the Admiral; sometimes he put his name above this title and sometimes not. When he did it was his habit to write it "Χρο Ferens"—a piece of affectation supposed, with its mixture of Greek and Latin, to indicate learning, which in the academic sense of the word Columbus did not possess. Over this signature it was his habit to place the following cipher, of which the significance is not certainly known :—

.S.
.S.A.S.
XMY
Χρο FERENS.

The most likely reading of it is, *Salve, Xristus, Maria, Yosephus*. This is arrived at by taking the top S for the invocation, and reading the other two lines as containing the first and last letters of the words indicated, the lower line containing the letters at the beginning of the words and the top line the letters with which they end. Other and less probable interpretations have from time to time been suggested, of which the following are the most interesting :—

SALVABO
SANCTVM SEPULCHRVM
XRISTE MARIA YESVS
XRISTE FERENS

SERVVS
SVM ALTISSIMI SALVATORIS
XRISTE MARIA YESVS
XRISTE FERENS

SERVVS
SVPPLEX ALTISSIMI SALVATORIS
XRISTE MARIA YOSEPH
XRISTE FERENS

SALVAT ME
SALVATOR ADJVVET SVCCVRAT
XSTVS MARIA YOSEPHVS
XRISTE FERENS

SVM
SEQVAX AMATOR SERVVS
XRISTI MARIAE YOSEPHI
XRISTE FERENS

SARACENOS
SVBIGAT AVERTAT SVBMOVEAT
XSTVS MARIA YOSEPHVS
XRISTE FERENS

SERVIDOR
SVS ALTERZAS SACRAS
XRISTO MARIA YSABEL
XRISTE FERENS

APPENDIX E

AFFIDAVITS OF JUNE 12, 1494

INFORMATION AND TESTIMONY, ETC.

Translation

ON the caravel, *Niña*, which is named *Santa Clara*, Thursday, June 12, in the year of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ 1494, the Most Magnificent Lord, Don Christopher Columbus, High Admiral of the Ocean-Sea, Vice-Roy and perpetual Governor of the Island of San Salvador, and of all the other islands, and continental land of the Indies, discovered and to be discovered, for the King and for the Queen, our Lords, and their Captain-General of the sea,—required me, Fernand Perez de Luna, one of the Public Notaries of the City of Isabella, on the part of their Highnesses: that inasmuch as he had left the said City Isabella with three caravels to come and discover the continental land of the Indies, although he had already discovered part of it on the other voyage which he had first made here the past year of the Lord 1493, and had not been able to learn the truth in regard to it: because although he travelled a long distance beside it, he had not found persons on the sea-coast who were able to give a trustworthy account of it, because they were all naked people who did not possess property of their own nor trade, nor go outside their houses, nor did others come to them, according to what he learned from them: and on this account he did not declare affirmatively that it was the continental land, except that he pronounced it doubtful, and had named it *La Juana* in memory of the Prince Don Juan, our Lord: and now he left the said city of Isabella the 24th day of the month of April and came to seek the land of the said *Juana* nearest to the island of Isabella, which is shaped like a triangle extending from east to west, and the point is the eastern part, twenty-two leagues from Isabella: and he followed its coast from the east to the west in order to go to a large island which the Indians called Jamaica, which he found after having gone a long distance, and he named it *La Isla de Santiago*, and went along all its coast from east to west, and afterwards returned to the continental land, which he called *La Juana*, to the place which he had left: and he followed the coast of *La Juana* to the west many days, so that he said that according to his navigation he passed 335 leagues from the time he commenced to enter it until the present time, on which journey he perceived many times and pronounced this to be continental land, by its formation and the information he had in regard to it, and the name of the people of the Provinces, especially the Province of Mango: and now, after having discovered an infinite number of islands, of which nobody has been able to count the whole, and arrived at a settlement, he took some Indians, who told him that the coast of this land extended to the west more than twenty days' journeys, nor did they know if it ended there: that from the place at which he had arrived, he determined to go somewhat farther onward, in order that all the persons who came in these ships, among whom there are Masters of charts of navigation and very good Pilots, the most famous that he could select in the great armada which he brought from Castile; and in order that they might see how very great this land is, and that from here the coast extends onward to the south, as he told them, he went four days farther forward that all might be very certain that it was continental land, because

in all these islands and lands there are no people by the sea, except naked people who live by fishing, and never go inland, nor know what the world is, nor anything about it at four leagues distance from their houses; and they believe that there is nothing in the world save islands, and are a people who have no law nor doctrine, save to be born and to die, nor have they any knowledge that they may be able to know of the world: and in order that, after having finished the said voyage, no one might have cause, with malice, to speak ill of, and belittle the things which merit great praise, the said Lord Admiral required me, the said Notary, as recited above, on the part of their Highnesses, to go personally with good witnesses to each one of the said caravels and publicly require the Master and company, and all the other people upon them, to say whether they had any doubt that this land was the mainland of the commencement of the Indies and the end to whomever in these parts might wish to come to Spain by land: and that if they had any doubt or knowledge in regard to it, that I should beg them to make it known, because then it would remove the doubt and would show them that this is certain and that it is the continental land. And I complied with the request in this manner, and publicly required here in the caravel *Niña* of the Master and Company, who are the persons I shall name below, each one by his name and of what place he is a citizen, and in the same manner, in the other two caravels aforesaid, I required of the Masters and company, and I thus declared it to them before the witnesses named below: everything in the manner that the said Lord Admiral had required it of me, I required of them; and I placed them under a penalty of 10,000 maravedis, and the cutting out of the tongue for every time that each one hereafter should say contrary to what they should now say: and if it shall be a ship's boy or a person of such condition, that he should be given one hundred lashes and have his tongue cut out: and every one having been thus required in all the three said caravels, each one by himself with great care, the Pilots, and Masters and Mariners looked at their navigator's charts, and considered and said as follows:—

Francisco Niño, citizen of Moguer, Pilot of the caravel *Niña*, said that by the oath he had taken, he did not hear of or see an island which could have 335 leagues on one coast from west to east, and which extended still farther: and that he saw now that the land turned to the south-south-west and to the south-west and west, and that certainly he had no doubt whatever that it was continental land: rather, he affirms it, and would maintain that it is continental land and not an island, and that before many leagues, in sailing along the said coast, land would be found where there are civilised people of intelligence, who trade and who know the world, etc.

Item: Alonso Medel, citizen of Palos, Master of the caravel *Niña*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of or saw an island, etc.

Item: Johan de la Cosa, citizen of the Puerto de Santa Maria, Master of chart-making, Mariner of the said caravel *Niña*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item: all the Mariners and ship's boys and other persons who were in the said caravel *Niña*, who understood something in regard to the sea, all said with one voice publicly, and each one for himself, that by the oath he had taken, that that was the continental land, because they never saw an island having 335 leagues on one coast, and which extended still farther than that: and that certainly they had no doubt of its being the continental land, and rather they affirmed it to be so; which said Mariners and ship's boys are the following, and named in the following manner: Johan del Barco, citizen of Palos, Mariner: Moron, citizen of Moguer: Francisco de Lepe, citizen of Moguer: Diego Beltran, citizen of Moguer: Domingo Ginoves: Estefano Veneciano: Juan de España Vizcaino: Gomez Calafar, citizen of Palos: Ramiro Perez, citizen of Lepe: Mateo de Morales, citizen of S. Juan del Puerto: Gonzalo Vizcaino, ship's boy: Francisco Ginoves, citizen of Cordova.; Rodrigo

Molinero, citizen of Moguer : Rodrigo Calafar, citizen of Cartaya : Alonso Niño, citizen of Moguer : Juan Vizcaino.

Item : Bartholomew Perez, citizen of Rota, Pilot of the caravel *San Juan*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : Alonso Perez Roldan, citizen of Málaga, Master of the said caravel *S. Juan*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : Alonso Rodriguez, citizen of Cartaya, Boatswain of the said caravel *S. Juan*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : all the Mariners and ship's boys and other persons who were in the said caravel *S. Juan*, who understood something in regard to the sea, all said with one voice publicly, and each one for himself, by the oath which they had taken, that that was continental land, because they never had seen an island of 335 leagues on one coast, and which extended still farther than that : and that certainly they had no doubt of its being continental land, rather they affirmed it to be so : which said Mariners and ship's boys are the following, and named in the following manner : Johan Rodriguez, citizen of Ciudad-Rodrigo, Mariner : Sebastian de Ayamonte, citizen of Ciudad-Rodrigo, Mariner : Diego del Monte, citizen of Moguer, Mariner : Francisco Calvo, citizen of Moguer, Mariner : Juan Dominguez, citizen of Palos, Mariner : Juan Albarracin, citizen of Puerto de Santa Maria, Mariner : Nicolas Estefano, Mallorquin, Cooper : Cristóbal Vivas, citizen of Moguer, ship's boy : Rodrigo de Santander, citizen of Moguer, ship's boy : Johan Garces, citizen of Beas, ship's boy : Pedro de Salas, Portuguese, citizen of Lisbon, ship's boy : Hernand Lopez, citizen of Huelva, ship's boy.

Item : Cristóbal Perez Niño, citizen of Palos, Master of the caravel *Cardera*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : Fenerin Ginoves, Boatswain of the said caravel *Cardera*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : Gonzalo Alonso Galeote, citizen of Huelva, Mariner, of the said caravel *Cardera*, said that by the oath he had taken, that he never heard of nor saw an island, etc.

Item : All the Mariners and ship's boys, and other persons who were in the said caravel *Cardera*, who understand something in regard to the sea, all said with one voice publicly, and each one for himself, that by the oath they had taken that that was the mainland, because they had never seen an island of 335 leagues on one coast, and which extended still farther than that : and that certainly they had no doubt of its being the continental land, rather they affirmed it to be so : which said Mariners and ship's boys are the following, and named in the following manner : Juan de Jerez, citizen of Moguer, Mariner : Francisco Carral, citizen of Palos, Mariner : Gorjon, citizen of Palos, Mariner : Johan Greigo, citizen of Genoa, Mariner : Alonso Perez, citizen of Huelva, Mariner : Juan Vizcaino, citizen of Cartaya, Mariner : Cristóbal Lorenzo, citizen of Palos, ship's boy : Francisco de Medina, citizen of Moguer, ship's boy : Diego Leal, citizen of Moguer, ship's boy : Francisco Niño, citizen of Palos, ship's boy : Tristan, citizen of Valduerna, ship's boy.

The witnesses who were present to see all of the aforesaid sworn, and each one by himself, according to, and in the manner contained above, Pedro de Terreros, Boatswain of the said Lord Admiral : and Iñigo Lopez de Zuñiga, Carver, Servants of the said Lord Admiral : and Diego Tristan, citizen of Seville : and Francisco de Morales, citizen of Seville, etc.

In the city of Isabella, Wednesday, January 14, in the year of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ 1495, the said Lord Admiral ordered me, Diego de Peñalosa, Clerk of the Court of the King and of the Queen, our Lords, and their Notary Public in their Court and in all their realms and seigniories, to

investigate the registers and protocols of Fernand Perez de Luna, one of the public notaries of the said city, defunct,—whom God have in his keeping—which had remained in my possession by virtue of an order given by the Lord Admiral to me, the said Diego de Peñalosa, signed with his name, in order that I could copy from the said registers and protocols whatever writing might be demanded of me authoritatively: by which said order, I was required on the part of the said Lord Admiral to search the said registers and protocols of the said Fernand Perez de Luna, in which I would find the said requisition which is declared in this said writing, and should give it to him signed and sealed with my seal in public form, in a manner which shows it to be valid, inasmuch as he intends to make use of it at some suitable time. And I, Diego de Peñalosa, the aforesaid Notary, in virtue of the said order which I hold from the said Lord Admiral to copy clearly and authoritatively any writings which may have passed before the aforesaid Fernand Perez da Luna, defunct notary —whom may God have in His keeping—which are in my possession, caused them to be written and clearly and conformably copied and my signature to be affixed to same. In witness of the truth,

DIEGO DE PEÑALOSA.

APPENDIX F

MAJORAT AND WILL OF COLUMBUS

FEBRUARY 22, 1498

Translation

IN THE NAME of the most Holy Trinity, which inspired me with the idea and afterwards made perfectly clear to me, that I could navigate and go to the Indies from Spain by traversing the Ocean-sea westwardly; and this I made known to the King, Don Ferdinand, and to the Queen, Doña Isabella, our Lords; and it pleased them to give me provisions and an equipage of men and ships, and to make me their Admiral in the said Ocean-sea, to the westward of an imaginary line which they ordered drawn from pole to pole one hundred leagues west of the Cape Verde and Azores islands; and their Viceroy and Governor General in all the mainlands and islands which I might find and discover to the westward of this line; and they also granted that my eldest son should succeed me in the said offices, and in the same manner from generation to generation for ever and ever; and that I should have the tenth of everything that might be discovered and possessed and produced in the said Almirantazgo; and also the eighth part of the lands and all the other things, and the salary which fitly belongs to the offices of Admiral, Viceroy, and Governor, and all the other perquisites pertaining to the said offices, which is all more fully contained in my Privilege and Capitulation, which I have from their Highnesses.

And it pleased our All Powerful Lord that in the year One thousand four hundred and ninety-two I should discover the mainland of the Indies and many islands, among which is Española, which the Indian inhabitants call *Ayte* and the Monicongos call *Cipango*. Afterwards I came back to Castile to their Majesties, and they directed me to return to the undertaking and to found and discover more; and thus our Lord gave me victory so that I conquered and made tributary the people of the island of Española, which is six hundred leagues around; and I discovered many cannibal islands, and seven hundred to the westward of Española among which is Jamaica, which we call Santiago, and three hundred and thirty-three leagues of mainland of the part from south to west, also one hundred and seven of the part of the north, which I had discovered on my first voyage with many islands; as will be seen more fully by my writings, memorandums, and navigators' maps. And because we hope in that high God that before long we may have a good and great revenue in the said islands and mainland, of which for the reason aforesaid the tenth and the eighth belong to me, with the salaries and perquisites aforesaid; and because we are mortal and it is well that each one should order and leave declared to his heirs and successors what he possesses and might possess:—Therefore it appeared well to me to found a Majorat from this eighth part of lands and offices and revenue, as I will state below:

In the first place: My son, Don Diego, shall succeed me, and if the Lord should dispose of him without his leaving sons, then my son, Don Ferdinand, shall succeed: and if our Lord should dispose of him without leaving a son, or my having another son, Don Bartholomew, my brother, shall succeed: and then his eldest son: and if our Lord should dispose of him without heirs, my brother, Don Diego, shall succeed, being married or able to marry; and then his eldest son shall succeed him; and in this manner from generation to generation perpetually, for ever after; commencing with my son Don Diego, and his

sons succeeding from one to another perpetually, or he not having a son, Don Ferdinand, my son, to succeed, as aforesaid; and then his son, he and the aforesaid Don Bartholomew and Don Diego, my brothers, succeeding from son to son for ever after, if it should fall to them.

And if it should please our Lord that after having passed for some time in the line of one of the said successors, this Majorat should lack legitimate heirs, the nearest of kin to the person who inherited it and in whose possession it was proscribed, shall succeed him and inherit it; he being of legitimate birth, and his name, inherited from his father and ancestors, being Columbus. And no woman may in any manner inherit this Majorat except that neither here nor in the other extremity of the world there shall be found a man of my true lineage whose name inherited from his ancestors shall be Columbus. And if this should happen (which God forbid), then in such a case the woman nearest in relationship and legitimate blood to the person who had in this manner come into possession of the said Majorat, shall have it; and this shall be with the conditions which I will give here below; which are to be understood as applying to my son, Don Diego, as well as to each one of the aforesaid persons, or to whomever may succeed, each one of them, which conditions they shall fulfil, and not fulfilling them, in such case they shall be deprived of the said Majorat, and the person nearest of kin to such a person in whose possession it was proscribed because of not having fulfilled what I say here shall have it; which person failing to fulfil said conditions shall be deprived of it, and another person the nearest of my lineage shall have it, providing he keeps the said conditions, which in this manner shall endure perpetually and shall be in the form above written. This forfeiture may not be understood for trifling matters originating from lawsuits, but for important matters appertaining to the honour of God, and to my honour and to that of my lineage, which means to fulfil freely what I have ordained, entirely as I say; all of which I recommend to the Courts of Justice. And I entreat the Holy Father, who now is, and those who may succeed in the Holy Church, if it should happen that this my will and testament may require his Holy edict and mandates in order to be fulfilled, that in virtue of obedience and under penalty of Papal excommunication he shall order it; and that in no manner may it ever be disfigured; and likewise I entreat the King and Queen, our Sovereigns, and the prince Don Juan our Lord, their first-born, that those who may succeed him, by the services I have rendered them and because it is just, that it may please them, and that they may not consent, that this my constitution of Majorat and testament, shall be disfigured, but that it may remain and be in the manner and form which I have ordained for ever; that it may be the service of the All Powerful God and the root and base of my lineage, and a memory of the services I have rendered their Highnesses; for I being born in Genoa came to serve them here in Castile, and discovered the Indies and the aforesaid islands for them, to the west of the mainland. Therefore I entreat their Highnesses that without lawsuit or demand or delay they may order summarily that this, my Privilege and testament, may be valid and may be fulfilled as may be, and is, contained therein; and I also entreat the Great Lords of the realms of his Highness, and the members of his Council and all the others who have or might have charge of justice or of a body (*regimiento*), that it may please them not to consent that this my will and testament shall be without strength and virtue, but that it may be fulfilled as ordered by me; as it is very just that a person of title who has served his King and Queen and the kingdom, should be respected in all that he may order and leave by testament or compromise, and Majorat and inheritance, and that it may not be transgressed in anything, neither in any part nor in all.

In the first place Don Diego, my son, and all those who succeed me and descend from me, and likewise my brothers Don Bartholomew and Don Diego, shall bear my arms, which I shall leave after my days, without inserting anything more in them, and shall seal with the seal of the arms. Don Diego, my son, or anyone else who inherits this Majorat, after having inherited and been

in possession of it, shall sign with my signature which I now use, which is an X with an S over it and an M with a Roman A over it, and over that an S and after it a Greek Y with an S over it, with its lines and points as is now my custom, and as will appear by my signatures of which many will be found, and as will appear by this.

And he shall only write *The Admiral* although he may be given and may acquire other titles from the King; this is to be understood in the signature and not in his enumeration of titles, where he will be able to write all his titles as shall please him; solely in the signature he will write *The Admiral.*

The said Don Diego or anyone else who inherits this Majorat shall have my office of Admiral of the Ocean-sea, which is of the part to the west of an imaginary line which his Highness ordered drawn from pole to pole 100 leagues beyond the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, beyond which they ordered and made me the Admiral of the Sea, with all the pre-eminences which the Admiral Don Henrique has in the Almirantazgo of Castile; and they made me their Viceroy and perpetual Governor for ever after, in all the islands and mainland discovered or to be discovered, for myself and my heirs, as appears more fully from my privileges which I have, and by my capitulation as above mentioned.

Item. That the said Don Diego, or anyone else who inherits the said Majorat, shall distribute the revenue that it shall please our Lord to give him, in this manner, under the said penalty.

In the first place: He will give of all that this Majorat may yield now and for ever, and of whatever shall be had and obtained from it and by it, the fourth part each year to Don Bartholomew Columbus, my brother, Adelantado of the Indies, and shall do this until he has for his revenues a million maravedis for his maintenance, and for the service which he has rendered and continues to render in the service of this Majorat; which said million he will receive as aforesaid each year, if the said fourth part amounts to so much, and he has nothing else; but having some or all of that amount in revenue, henceforth he shall not have the said million or a part of it; except that from now he shall have in the said fourth part as much as the said amount of a million, if it amounts to that; and as much as he has of revenue besides this fourth part, whatever sum of maravedis of known revenue from property which he might be able to rent, or perpetual offices, the said quantity of revenue which he may have in this manner or he will be able to have from the said his property or perpetual offices, shall be abated; and from the said million whatever marriage dower he receives with the woman he marries shall be reserved; so that all that he has with the said woman, it will not be understood that on account of it he will have to discount anything from the said million save what he acquires or possesses beyond the said marriage portion of his wife; and after it shall please God that he or his heirs, or whoever descends from him, may have a million of revenue from property and offices, if he should wish to rent them as aforesaid, he nor his heirs shall have nothing more from the fourth part of the said Majorat, and the said Don Diego, or whoever inherits, shall have it.

Don Ferdinand, my son, shall have of the said revenue of the said Majorat or of another fourth part of it, a million each year, if the said fourth part amounts to so much, until he has two millions of revenue in the same form and manner which is said of Don Bartholomew, my brother, he and his heirs, in the same manner as Don Bartholomew, my brother, and his heirs, have the said million or the part which is deficient from it.

Item. The said Don Diego and Don Bartholomew shall order that Don Diego, my brother, shall have from the revenue of the said Majorat as much as will suffice to maintain him honestly, as my brother which he is, to whom I leave no stipulated sum, because he wishes to be of the church, and they will give him what is right; and this shall be in one sum, before anything is given to Don Ferdinand, my son, or to Don Bartholomew, my brother, or to their heirs, and also according to the income derived from the said Majorat; and

if there should be disagreement in this, then in said case it may be referred to two of our kinsmen, or to other honourable persons, that they may choose one and he may choose the other; and if they should not be able to agree, the two said arbitrators may select another person of honour, who shall not be suspected by any of the parties.

Item. That all the revenue which I order given to Don Bartholomew and to Don Ferdinand, and to Don Diego, my brother, they may have and may be given to them as aforesaid, as long as they and their heirs are loyal and faithful to Don Diego, my son, or whoever inherits; and if it should be found that they were in opposition to him in anything pertaining to his honour and in opposition to the increase of my lineage and of the said Majorat, in word or in deed, by which there should appear and should be offence and abasement of my lineage and loss to the same estate, or any one of them, they shall not have anything from that time forward; so that they may always be faithful to Don Diego or whoever inherits.

Item. As in the beginning when I created this Majorat, I intended to distribute, or that Don Diego, my son, or any other person who inherited it, should distribute to needy persons, the tenth part of the revenue as a tithe and in commemoration of the Eternal All Powerful God; for this reason I now say that, to further and carry out my intention, and in order that His High Majesty may aid me and those who may inherit this, here or in the other world, the said tithe shall yet be paid in this manner:

In the first place. Of the fourth part of the revenue from this Majorat, which I ordained and directed should be given to Don Bartholomew, until he should have a million of revenue, it shall be understood that the said tenth of all the rent of the said Majorat is included in this million; and that as the revenue of the said Don Bartholomew, my brother, increases, as something or all may have to be discounted from the revenue of the fourth part of the Majorat, that all the aforesaid rent shall be seen and counted in order to know how much the tenth of it amounts to; and the part which does not fall to, or exceeds, what the said Don Bartholomew requires for the million,—that the persons of my lineage who shall most need it shall have it in discount from the said tenth, looking out to give it to a person who has not Fifty thousand maravedis of income; and if the one who has least should come to possess an income of Fifty thousand maravedis, he shall have the part which two persons who shall be chosen for this purpose shall determine, together with Don Diego or with whoever inherits; so that it is to be understood that the million which I order given to Don Bartholomew comprehends the said tenth aforesaid of the said Majorat; and that all this revenue from the Majorat I wish and have ordered distributed to my nearest and most needy kinsmen; and after the said Don Bartholomew has his million and there is nothing owing him from the said fourth part, then the said Don Diego, my son, or the person who may have the said Majorat, with the other two persons whom I shall here designate, shall see and may see, that the tenth part of all this rent is given to, and possessed by, the most needy persons of my lineage who shall be here or in any other part of the world, where they shall be diligently sought; and it may be of the said fourth part from which the said Don Bartholomew is to have the million; which I calculate and give in discount from the said tenth, by reason of computation, that if the aforesaid tenth amounts to more, this excess shall also come from the fourth part and the most needy shall have it, as I have already said; and if it is not enough, that the said Don Bartholomew shall have it until his own increases, leaving the said million in part or in whole.

Item. That the said Don Diego, my son, or the person who inherits, shall take two persons of my lineage, the nearest of kin, and persons of spirit and authority, who will diligently examine the said revenue and the account thereof, and cause the said tenth to be paid from the said fourth part, from which the said million is given to Don Bartholomew,—to the most needy of my lineage who shall be here or anywhere else, and they shall inquire for them

with much diligence and upon charge of their souls: and as it might be that the said Don Diego or the person who inherits might not wish for some reason which may relate to their own good and honour, and the sustainment of the said Majorat, that the entire revenue from it should be known, I direct him that he shall yet make known the said revenue upon charge of his soul, and I direct the aforesaid two persons upon charge of their consciences and souls, not to denounce or publish it, save when it shall be the will of the said Don Diego, or the person who inherits, only making sure that the said tenth is paid in the manner aforesaid.

Item. That there may be no differences in the choice of these two nearest kinsmen who shall act with Don Diego, or with the person who inherits, I say that therefore I choose Don Bartholomew, my brother, for one, and Don Ferdinand, my son, for the other, and as soon as they enter into the matter they shall be obliged to name two other persons who shall be the nearest of my lineage and of great confidence: and these shall choose two others at the same time that they commence to employ themselves in this action: and thus it will be continued from one to another with much diligence, the same in this as in the other matter of government, for the benefit and honour and service of God, and of the said Majorat, for ever.

Item. I direct the said Don Diego, my son, or the person who inherits the said Majorat, to keep and always maintain in the city of Genoa, a person of our lineage who has a house and wife there, and I direct that he shall have an income so that he may be able to live honestly, as a person so near to our lineage: and that he may be the root and base of it in the said city, as a citizen thereof, so that he may have aid and protection from the said city in matters of his own necessity, since from it I came, and in it I was born.

Item. That the said Don Diego, or whoever inherits the said Majorat, shall send in the form of exchange or in whatever manner he is able, all the moneys which he saves from the revenues of the said Majorat, and shall cause to be purchased from them in his name and that of his heir, some purchases called *logros*, which the office of St George has, and which now yields 6 per cent. and are very sure moneys, and this shall be for the purpose which I shall state here.

Item. Because it becomes every man of rank and income to serve God, and for the benefit of his honour that it may be perceived that it is by himself and by means of his fortune, and as any money whatever yonder in St George is very secure and Genoa is a noble and powerful city by the sea; and because at the time I started to go and discover the Indies it was with the intention of supplicating the King and Queen, our Lords, that the revenue which their Highnesses might have from the Indies, they should determine to spend in the conquest of Jerusalem; and in this manner I supplicated it, and if they do it, it will be a good design; and if not, that it may yet be the said Don Diego, or the person who inherits in this purpose to collect the said money in order to go with the King, our Lord, if it should be to Jerusalem to reconquer it; or to go alone with the greatest force that he has, that it will please our Lord if he has and shall have this intention, to give him such aid that he will be able to do it, and may do it; and if he shall not have money to conquer all, that he will give him at least enough for a part of it; therefore let him collect and make his fund from his treasure in the places of St George in Genoa, and let it there multiply until he has a sufficient quantity so that it may appear to him and he may know, that he will be able to do some good work in this matter of Jerusalem; because I believe that after the King and Queen, our Lords, and their successors, shall see that he is determined in this, their Highnesses will be moved to do it themselves, and will give him aid and comfort, as to a servant and vassal, who will do it in their name.

Item. I direct Don Diego, and all those who descend from me, especially to the person who inherits this Majorat, which consists as I have said of the tenth of all that shall be found and possessed in the Indies, and the eighth part of the other extreme of lands and revenue, all which with the perquisites from

my offices of Admiral and Viceroy and Governor, is more than 25 per cent.: that all the revenue from this and their persons and the power they have, shall be obliged and employed in sustaining and serving their Highnesses or their heirs, well and faithfully, as far as to lose and spend their lives and fortunes for their Highnesses; because their Highnesses, after God our Lord, gave me the beginning to have and to be able to acquire and obtain this Majorat; although I came to them in their realms, to persuade them to this undertaking, and there was a long time that they did not give me support to put it in operation; although this is not to be marvelled at, because this undertaking was unknown to all the world and there was no one who would believe it, by which I am under very great obligation to them, and because since then they have always granted me many favours and much increase.

Item. I direct the said Don Diego, or whoever possesses the said Majorat, that if through our sins any schism should arise in the Church of God, or if through tyranny any person of whatever rank or condition he may be should wish to dispossess it of its honour and property, under the aforesaid penalty he shall place his person at the feet of the Holy Father, except he should be a heretic (which God forbid), to be determined for and used for the work of serving him, with all his power and revenue and estate, and in delivering the Church from the said schism and preventing the Church from being dispossessed of its honour and property.

Item. I direct the said Don Diego, or whoever possesses the said Majorat, that he shall always strive and labour for the honour and good and increase of the city of Genoa, and shall use all his strength and property in defending and augmenting the benefit and honour of the republic, not going in opposition to the service of the Church of God, and the high estate of the King and of the Queen, our Lords, and of their successors.

Item. That the said Don Diego, or the person who inherits, or shall be in possession of the said Majorat, from the fourth part of which, as I have said above, shall be distributed the tenth of all the rent, when Don Bartholomew and his heirs shall have saved the two millions or part of it, and when some of the tenth is to be distributed to our kinsmen,—that he and the said two persons with him, who shall be our kinsmen, must distribute and spend this tenth in the marriage of girls of our lineage who may require it, and in doing as much good as they are able.

Item. That at the time which is found suitable, he shall order a church built in the most proper place in the island of Española, which shall be entitled Santa Maria de la Concepcion, and it shall have a hospital upon the best possible plan, the same as those in Castile and Italy; and he shall order a chapel to be erected in which masses for my soul and the souls of our ancestors and successors shall be said with much devotion; as it pleases our Lord to give us a sufficient revenue so that the aforesaid may be fulfilled.

Item. I direct the said Don Diego, my son, or whoever inherits the said Majorat, to labour to maintain and sustain in the island of Española four good professors of the Holy Theology, with intention and idea of their labouring, and ordering that they shall labour, to convert to our Holy Faith all those people of the Indies, and when it pleases our Lord that the revenue of the said Majorat shall increase, that the professors and devout persons shall be increased in the same manner, and shall labour to make these people Christians: and for this, he shall have no regret in spending all that is necessary; and in commemoration of what I say, and of all the aforesaid, he shall have erected in the most public place in the said church of the Conception, a monument in order continually to remind the said Don Diego of what I say, and all the other persons who shall see it, on which monument shall be an inscription which shall say this.

Item. I direct Don Diego, my son, or whoever inherits the said Majorat, that each time and as many times as he is obliged to confess he shall first show this compromise, or the copy of it, to his confessor, and shall entreat him to

read everything, that he may have reason to examine into the fulfilment of it; and it may be the cause of much good and the repose of his soul.

Thursday, February 22, 1498.

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el Almirante.

CODICIL EXECUTED AT VALLADOLID

MAY 19, 1506

IN the noble city of Valladolid, on the 19th day of the month of May in the year of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ 1506,—before me, Pedro de Hinojedo, Clerk of the Court of their Highnesses and Notary Public of Province in their Court and Chancery, and their Clerk and Notary Public in all their Kingdoms and Seigniories; and in the presence of the witnesses below written: The Señor Don Christopher Columbus, Admiral and Viceroy and Governor-General of the islands and mainland of the Indies, discovered and to be discovered, which he said that he was: being infirm in body, said, that whereas he had made his testament before a Notary Public, that now he rectified, and rectifies, the said testament, and approved it and did approve it as good, and if it was necessary he executed it and did execute it anew: and now in addition to the said his testament, he had written a document with his hand and letter, which he showed and presented before me, the said Notary Public, which he said was written with his hand and letter and signed with his name: that he executed and did execute all that was contained in the said document, before me, the said Notary Public, according to, and in the manner and form which was contained in the said document, and all the bequests contained therein, that they may be fulfilled and be valid as his last and final will. And to fulfil the said his testament, which he had, and has made and executed, and all contained therein, every one thing and part of it, he named and did name for the Agents and Executors of his will, Señor Don Diego Columbus, his son, and Don Bartholomew Columbus, his brother, and Juan de Porras, Treasurer of Vizcaya, that all three of them may fulfil this testament and all contained therein, and in the said document, and all the legacies and bequests and obsequies in it contained. For which purpose he said that he gave and did give to all, sufficient authority, and that he executed and did execute before me, the said Notary Public, everything contained in the said writing, and to those present he said that he requested and did request that they would be witnesses. The witnesses who were present, named, and requested for everything afo esaid,—the Bachelor Andres Mirueña and Gaspar de la Misericordia, citizens of this said city of Valladolid, and Bartolomé de Fresco and Alvaro Perez, and Juan Despinosa and Andrea and Fernando de Vargas, and Francisco Manuel and Fernan Martinez, servants of the said Señor Admiral. The contents of which said document, which was written with the letter and hand of the said Admiral, and signed with his name, *de verbo ad verbum*, are as follows:

When I went from Spain in the year 1502, I made an order and Majorat of my property and of what then appeared to me to fulfil my will and the service of Eternal God, and my honour, and the honour of my successors: which document I left in the monastery of Las Cuevas in Seville, with Father Don Gaspar, with my other writings and privileges, and the letters which I have received from the King and Queen, our Lords. Which order I approve and confirm by this, which I write for the greater fulfilment and declaration of my intention. Which I order fulfilled in the manner here declared and contained, that what shall be discharged by this may not make the other void, because it may not be twice [written].

And I constituted my dear son, Don Diego, for my heir of all my property

and the offices which I have by right and inheritance, from what I created in the Majorat, and he not having a male heir, my son Don Ferdinand shall inherit in the same manner, and he not having a male heir, that Don Bartholomew, my brother, shall inherit in the same manner, and in the same manner if he shall not have a male heir, that my other brother shall inherit; which is to be understood thus, the nearest kinsman of my lineage from one to the other for ever. And no woman shall inherit, excepting no man can be found, and if this should happen, it shall be the woman who is nearest of my lineage.

And I direct the said Don Diego, my son, not to think or presume to change the said Majorat, except to increase and add to it; that is to say, that the income which he receives, with his person and estate, shall serve the King and Queen, our Lords, and the increase of the Christian religion.

The King and Queen, our Lords, when I served them in the Indies: I say served, because it appears that I, by the will of God, our Lord, gave the Indies to them, as something which was mine: I can say it, because I importuned their Highnesses for them, the way thereto being hidden and unknown to all who spoke of them, and in order to go and discover them, besides contributing the information and my person, their Highnesses did not spend or wish to spend for it, more than a million maravedis, and it was necessary for me to spend the rest: thus it pleased their Highnesses that I should have for my part of the said Indies, Islands and mainlands, which are situated west of a line which they ordered drawn from pole to pole One Hundred leagues upon the Azores and Cape Verde Islands—that I should have for my part the third and the eighth of all, and also the tenth of what is in them, as will be shown more fully by the said my privileges and letters of grace.

Because until the present time no revenue has been received from the said Indies, and as, of it, I can divide what I shall designate below, and it is hoped in the mercy of our Lord that a very great revenue may be received, my intention would be and is, that Don Ferdinand, my son, shall have a million and a half from it each year, and Don Bartholomew, my brother, One Hundred and Fifty thousand maravedis, and Don Diego, my brother, One Hundred thousand maravedis, because he is in the Church. More than this I cannot say definitely, because until the present time, I have not received, neither is there a known revenue, as aforesaid.

I say to explain more fully the aforesaid, that my will is that the said Don Diego, my son, may have the said Majorat, with all my property and offices, in the manner which has been expressed and as I have them. And I say that from the whole of the revenue which he shall have by reason of the said inheritance, he shall make ten parts each year, and one of these parts he shall divide among those of our kin who appear to be the most needy, and among poor people and in other pious works. And afterwards, he shall take two of these nine parts and divide them into thirty-five parts, and of the thirty-five parts Don Ferdinand, my son, shall have twenty-seven, and Don Bartholomew, five, and Don Diego, my brother, three. And because as aforesaid, my desire would be that Don Ferdinand my son should have a million and a half, and Don Bartholomew One Hundred and Fifty thousand maravedis, and Don Diego One Hundred thousand; and I do not know how this will come about, because until the present time the said revenue of the said Majorat is not known nor can it be computed; I say that this order above expressed shall be followed, until it shall please our Lord that the said two parts of the said nine shall be enough and shall increase to such an amount as to provide the said million and a half for Don Ferdinand, the One Hundred and Fifty thousand for Don Bartholomew, and the One Hundred thousand for Don Diego.

And when it shall please God that this shall be, or if the said two parts to be understood from the nine aforesaid, shall amount to the sum of One million Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand maravedis, then Don Diego, or whoever inherits, shall have all the surplus. And I say so, and request the said Don Diego, my son, or whoever inherits, that if the revenue from this said Majorat

increases so much, that he will please me by giving the part here designated to Don Ferdinand and my brothers.

I say that I create a Majorat for Don Ferdinand of this part which I direct to be given to him, and that his oldest son shall succeed therein, and thus from one to another perpetually, without having power to sell, or exchange, or give or transfer it in any manner, and it shall be in the manner and form expressed in the other Majorat, which I have created for Don Diego, my son.

I say to Don Diego, my son, and direct, that when he receives sufficient revenue from the said Majorat and inheritance, that he shall maintain three Chaplains in a chapel which he shall have builded, who shall say three masses each day, one to the honour of the Holy Trinity, another to the Conception of our Lady, and the other for the souls of all the faithful dead, and for my soul and the souls of my father and mother and wife. And if his fortune is sufficient he may make the said chapel honourable, and increase the orisons and prayers for the Honour of the Holy Trinity, and if this can be in the island of Española, which God gave me miraculously, I would be glad that it might be yonder, where I invoked it, which is in the Vega that is called La Concepcion.

And I say so, and direct Don Diego, my son, or whomsoever inherits, to pay all the debts which I leave here in a memorandum in the manner expressed therein, and furthermore the other debts which it shall justly appear that I owe. And I direct him to make provision for Beatriz Enriquez, mother of Don Fernando, my son, so that she may be able to live honestly, being a person to whom I am under very great obligation. And this shall be done for the satisfaction of my conscience, because this matter weighs heavily upon my soul. The reason for which, it is not fitting to write here.

Done the 25th of August 1505.

[Signed :] CHRISTO FERENS.

The witnesses who were present and saw the Señor Admiral make and execute all the aforesaid, as written above: the said Bachelor de Mirueña, Gaspar de la Misericordia, citizens of the said city of Valladolid, and Bartholomé de Fresco and Alvaro Perez, and Juan Despinosa and Andrea and Fernando de Vargas and Francisco Manuel and Fernan Martinez, servants of the said Señor Admiral. And I, the said Pedro de Hinojedo, the aforesaid clerk and Notary Public, together with the said witnesses, witnessed the aforesaid. And I, therefore, affix this, my signature, here, to that effect. In testimony of the truth. PEDRO DE HINOJEDO, Clerk.

In continuation of the codicil in the hand of the Admiral, there was a memorandum or annotation, also in his hand, to the following effect:

Citation of certain persons, to whom I wish given from my property what is contained in this memorandum, without anything being required from them. Have it given in such manner that they may not know who orders it to be given to them.

In the first place, to the heirs of Gerónimo del Puerto, father of Benito del Puerto, Chancellor in Genoa, twenty ducats, or its value.

To Antonio Vazo, Genoese shopkeeper, who was in the habit of living in Lisbon, Two thousand Five Hundred reals of Portugal, which are a little more than seven ducats, there being three hundred and seventy-five reals to the ducat.

To a Jew, who dwelt at the gate of the Jewry in Lisbon, or whom a Priest shall designate, the value of half a silver mark.

To the heirs of Luis Centurion Escoto, Genoese shopkeeper, thirty thousand reals of Portugal, of those which are worth 385 reals to the ducat, which equals seventy-five ducats, a little more or less.

To these same heirs and to the heirs of Paulo de Negro, Genoese, one hundred ducats or their value; half to go to the heirs of one, and half to the heirs of the other.

To Baptista Espíndola, or to his heirs, if he is dead, twenty ducats. This Baptista Espíndola is the son-in-law of the said Luis Centurion and was the son of Nicolao Espíndola of Locoli de Ronco, and apparently was living in Lisbon in the year 1482.

Which said memorandum and charge aforesaid, I, the Clerk, testify was written in the said Admiral's own handwriting, in testimony to which, I subscribed my name thereto. PEDRO DE AZCOYTIA.

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